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DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
SHERIDAN AND GOLDSMITH.

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

SHERIDAN AND GOLDSMITH.

With Goldsmith's Poems.



LONDON:

W. KENT & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.

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NOTICE.

VERY many applications having been received for the Plays of *Sheridan* and *Goldsmith*, uniform with those of *Shakespeare* in the *Miniature Library of the Poets*, the publishers are induced to add them to that series, and hope they will meet with the same cordial approval as the previous volumes, of which considerably more than a quarter of a million have already been sold.

The present edition contains the *Poems of Goldsmith*, in addition to his plays, and all the *Plays of Sheridan* that can be properly called his. It is true that *Pizarro* and the *Trip to Scarborough* usually appear as part of the *Dramatic Works of Sheridan*, but as the former is simply a translation and adaptation from Kotzebue, and the latter a version of Vanbrugh's first play, *The Relapse*, under another title, neither of them can be strictly said to belong to Sheridan's Works. The publishers have therefore omitted these two plays, both on this ground and because they are greatly inferior to the others and are rarely acted or read. They have also omitted *The Camp*, which had only a passing interest, and added nothing to the author's reputation.

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{ THE RIVALS.

A COMEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY PERFORMED AT COVENT-GARDEN.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE	..	..	Mr. Shuter.
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE	..	..	Mr. Woodward.
FAULKLAND	..	..	Mr. Lewis.
ACRES	..	..	Mr. Quick.
SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER	..	..	Mr. Lee.
FAG	..	..	Mr. Lee Lewes.
DAVID	..	..	Mr. Dunstal.
COACHMAN	..	..	Mr. Fearon.
MRS. MALAPROP	..	..	Mrs. Green.
LYDIA LANGUISH	..	..	Miss Barsanti.
JULIA	..	..	Mrs. Bulkley.
LUCY	..	..	Mrs. Lessingham.

Maid, Boy, Servants, &c.

SCENE: *Bath.* Time of action, *five hours.*

PROLOGUE BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODWARD AND MR. QUICK.

*Enter SERJEANT-AT-LAW, and ATTORNEY following,
and giving a paper.*

Serj. What's here! a vile cramp hand! I cannot see
Without my spectacles.

Att. He means his fee.

Nay, Mr. Serjeant, good sir, try again. [*Gives money.*]

Serj. The scrawl improves! [*more*]. Oh, come, 't is
pretty plain.

Eh! how's this? Dibble! sure it cannot be!
A poet's brief! a poet and a fee!

Att. And if the fee offends, your wrath should fall
On me.

Serj. Dear Dibble, no offence at all.

Att. Some sons of Phœbus in the courts we meet,

Serj. And fifty sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!

Att. Nor pleads he worse, who with a decent sprig
Of bays adorns his legal waste of wig.

Serj. Full-bottomed heroes thus, on signs, unfurl
A leaf of laurel in a grove of curl!

Yet tell your client that, in adverse days,
This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.

Att. Do you, then, sir, my client's place supply,
Profuse of robe, and prodigal of tie—

Do you, with all those blushing powers of face,
And wonted bashful hesitating grace,
Rise in the court, and flourish on the case. *[Exit.*

Serj. For practice then suppose—this brief will
show it—

Me, Serjeant Woodward, counsel for the poet.
Used to the ground, I know 't is hard to deal
With this dread court, from whence there's no appeal ;
No tricking here to blunt the edge of law,
Or, damned in equity, escape by flaw ;
But judgment given, your sentence must remain ;
No writ of error lies—to Drury Lane !

Yet when so kind you seem, 't is past dispute
We gain some favour, if not costs of suit.
No spleen is here ! I see no hoarded fury ;
I think I never faced a milder jury !
Sad else our plight, where frowns are transportation,
A hiss the gallows, and a groan damnation !
But such the public candour, without fear
My client waives all right of challenge here.
No newsman from our session is dismissed,
Nor wit nor critic we scratch off the list ;
His faults can never hurt another's ease,
His crime, at worst, a bad attempt to please :
Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will stand or fall.

PROLOGUE BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN ON THE TENTH NIGHT, BY MRS. BULKLEY.

GRANTED our cause, our suit and trial o'er,
The worthy Serjeant need appear no more:
In pleasing I a different client choose,
He served the Poet, I would serve the Muse.
Like him, I'll try to merit your applause,
A female counsel in a female's cause.
Look on this form,* where Humour, quaint and sly,
Dimples the cheek, and points the beaming eye:
Where gay Invention seems to boast its wiles
In amorous hint, and half-triumphant smiles;
While her light mask or covers Satire's strokes,
Or hides the conscious blush her wit provokes.
Look on her well—does she seem formed to teach?
Should you expect to hear this lady preach?
Is gray experience suited to her youth?
Do solemn sentiments become that mouth?
Bid her be grave, those lips should rebel prove
To every theme that slanders mirth or love.

Yet thus adorned with every graceful art
To charm the fancy and yet reach the heart—
Must we displace her? And instead advance
The Goddess of the woful countenance—

* Pointing to the figure of Comedy.

The sentimental Muse! Her emblems view
The *Pilgrim's Progress*, and a sprig of rue!
View her—too chaste to look like flesh and blood—
Primly portrayed on emblematic wood!
There fixed in usurpation should she stand,
She'll snatch the dagger from her sister's hand:
And having made her vot'ries weep a flood,
Good heaven! she'll end her comedies in blood—
Bid Harry Woodward break poor Dunstal's crown!
Imprison Quick, and knock Ned Shuter down;
While sad Barsanti, weeping o'er the scene,
Shall stab herself, or poison Mrs. Green.

Such dire encroachments to prevent in time,
Demands the critic's voice—the poet's rhyme.
Can our light scenes add strength to holy laws!
Such puny patronage but hurts the cause:
Fair Virtue scorns our feeble aid to ask;
And moral Truth disdains the trickster's mask.
For here their fav'rite stands,* whose brow, severe
And sad, claims Youth's respect, and Pity's tear;
Who, when oppressed by foes her worth creates,
Can point a poniard at the Guilt she hates.

* Pointing to Tragedy.

THE RIVALS.



ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Street at Bath.*

COACHMAN *crosses the stage.* Enter FAG, *looking after him.*

Fag. What! Thomas! Sure 'tis he? What! Thomas! Thomas!

Coach. Eh! Odd's life! Mr. Fag, give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad: why, my prince of charioteers, you look so hearty; but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Coach. Sure, master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion, be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Ay! master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit; so he'd a mind to gi't the slip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay! hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Coach. Why, sure!

Fag. At present I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you havn't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther: briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are! Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning on't.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas?

Coach. As a coach-horse.

Fag. Why then the cause of all this is—LOVE,—LOVE, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. But pray, why does your master pass only for *ensign*? now, if he had shammed *general* indeed—

Fag. Ah, Thomas, there lays the mystery o' the matter. Hark'ee, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a *half-pay ensign*, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet of three thousand a year.

Coach. That is an odd taste indeed! but has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

Fag. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Zounds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman! She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold—she feeds her parrot with small peas—and all her thread-papers are made of bank-

Coach. Bravo, faith! Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least: but does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish. But there is an old tough aunt in the way; though, by the by, she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it—here's a mort o' merry-making, eh?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge; but damn the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle or a card after eleven! However, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties; I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much. But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must. Here now—this wig! what the devil do you do with a wig, Thomas? None of the London whips of any degree of *ton* wear wigs now.

Coach. More's the pity! more's the pity, I say—Odd's life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 't would go next. Odd rabbit it, when the fashion had got foot on the Bar, I guessed 't would mount to the Box! but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look ye, I'll never give up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas!

Coach. Zooks! 'tis the captain. Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No, no! that is Madam Lucy, my master's mistress's maid; they lodge at that house, but I must after him to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd, he's giving her money! well, Mr. Fag.

Fag. Good-bye, Thomas. I have an appointment in Gyde's Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. *A Dressing-room in MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.*

LYDIA LANGUISH *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand*; LUCY, *as just returned from a message.*

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it; I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I haven't been at.

Lydia. And could not get *The Reward of Constancy*?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lydia. Nor *The Fatal Connexion*?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lydia. Nor *The Mistakes of the Heart*?

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lydia. Heigho! Did you inquire for *The Delicate Distress*?

Lucy. Or *The Memoirs of Lady Woodford*? Yes, indeed, ma'am, I asked everywhere for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wasn't fit for a Christian to read.

Lydia. Heigho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me; she has a most observing thumb: and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the con-

venience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh, here, ma'am! [*Taking books from under her cloak and from her pockets.*] This is *The Man of Feeling*, and this *Peregrine Pickle*. Here are *The Tears of Sensibility*, and *Humphry Clinker*.

Lydia. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is——

[*Exit Lucy.*]

Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Lud, ma'am, here is Miss Melville!

Lydia. Is it possible!

Enter JULIA.

Lydia. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I! [*Embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Julia. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater; but what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

Lydia. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! but first inform me what has conjured you to Bath? Is Sir Anthony here?

Julia. He is; we arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lydia. Then, before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress. I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me. My letters have informed you of my whole connection with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia. My aunt has discovered our intercourse by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since. Yet, would you believe it? she has ~~fallen~~

absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

Julia. You jest, Lydia!

Lydia. No, upon my word. She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him; but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

Julia. Then surely she is now more indulgent to her niece?

Lydia. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague. That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day, so that, I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits.

Julia. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best. Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lydia. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Julia. What was his offence?

Lydia. Nothing at all. But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel. And, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity. So last Thursday I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addresses to another woman. I signed it, "Your Friend Unknown," showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

Julia. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lydia. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the

matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Julia. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lydia. But, you know, I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Julia. Nay, this is caprice.

Lydia. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

Julia. I do not love even his faults.

Lydia. But apropos! You have sent to him, I suppose?

Julia. Not yet, upon my word; nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath. Sir Anthony's resolution was, so sudden I could not inform him of it.

Lydia. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Julia. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death. That and some consequent embarrassments have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish. He is too generous to trifle on such a point; and, for his character, you wrong him there too. No, Lydia; he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous. If he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the foibles of love, he is negligent of the little du-

expected from a lover. This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lydia. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him. But tell me candidly, Julia—had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Julia. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland; but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient—

Lydia. Obligation! Why a water-spaniel would have done as much. Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim. What's here?

Enter LUCY, in a hurry.

Lucy. Oh, ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

Lydia. They'll not come here. Lucy, do you watch. *[Exit Lucy.]*

Julia. Yet I must go; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me as long as she chooses with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied without being mispronounced.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. O lud, ma'am; they are both coming upstairs!

Lydia. Well, I'll not detain you. Adieu, my dear

Julia ; I am sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland. There, through my room you'll find another staircase.

Julia. Adieu.

[Exit.

Lydia. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick! Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet, throw *Roderick Random* into the closet, put *The Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*, thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sofa, cram *Ovid* behind the bolster ; there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket ! Now for them.

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY
ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. M. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lydia. Madam, I thought you once——

Mrs. M. You thought, miss ! I dont know any business you have to think at all. Thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

Lydia. Ah, madam, our memories are independent of our will. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But I say it is, miss ! There is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed, and I thought it my duty so to do ; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories dont become a young woman.

Sir A. Why, sure, she wont pretend to remember what she's ordered not ! Ay, this comes of her reading.

Lydia. What crime, madam, have I committed to be treated thus ?

Mrs. M. Now dont attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter. You know I have proof controvertible of it. But, tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lydia. Madam, I must tell you plainly that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They dont become a young woman; and you ought to know that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he had been a blackamoor, and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made; and when it pleased heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed. But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lydia. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room. You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

Lydia. Willingly, ma'am; I cannot change for the worse. [Exit.

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir A. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am; all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library; she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers. From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir A. Madam, a circulating library in a town is an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge ! It blossoms through the year ! And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony ! you surely speak laconically.

Sir A. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know ?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning ; I dont think so much learning becomes a young woman ; for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning : nor would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments ; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts ; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know ; and I dont think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir A. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you ; though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate,—you say you have no objection to my proposal ?

Mrs. M. None, I assure you. I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres ; and as Lydia is so

obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir A. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly. He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir A. Objection! let him object if he dare! No, no, Mrs. Malaprop; Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 't was, "Jack, do this." If he demurred, I knocked him down; and if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. M. Ay, and the properest way, o' my conscience! Nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity. Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations; and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir A. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her her dinner for three or four days, you cant conceive how she'd come about. *[Exit.*

Mrs. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition. She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure Lucy cant have betrayed me! No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it. Lucy! Lucy! *[Calls.]* Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Yes, girl. Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

Lucy. O gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out!

Mrs. M. Well, dont let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. M. So come to me, presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are entrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence for ever: and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. *[Exit.*

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite; *[Altering her manner]* let girls in my station be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trusts, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it! Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately: *[Looks at a paper]* *For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign: in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c. numberless.—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half—about a quarter's pay. Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her—when I found matters were likely to be discovered,—two guineas and a black padusoy. Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters—which I never delivered—two guineas and a pair of buckles. Item, from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three*

crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box! Well done, simplicity! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [Exit

ACT II.

SCENE I. CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE's Lodgings.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE and FAG.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in: I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Capt. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life, I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished.

Capt. Well, sir, and what did you say?

Fag. Oh, I lied, sir—I forget the precise lie, but you may depend on't he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

Capt. You have said nothing to them?

Fag. Oh, not a word, sir—not a word. Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

Capt. 'Sdeath! you rascal! you have not trusted him?

Fag. Oh, no, sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity. He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly! My master (said I) honest Thomas (you know, sir, one says honest to one's in-

feriors) is come to Bath to recruit—yes, sir—I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Capt. Well, recruit will do; let it be so.

Fag. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly. Indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard-markers.

Capt. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon. But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it. Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge endorsements as well as the bill.

Capt. Well, take care you dont hurt your credit by offering too much security. Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Capt. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol. I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down——

Capt. Go tell him I am here.

Fag. Yes, sir. [*Going.*] I beg pardon, sir; but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Capt. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation; for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit.*]

Capt. Now for my whimsical friend. If he does not know that his mistress is here I'll tease him a little before I tell him——

Enter FAG.

Fag. Mr. Faulkland, sir.

[Exit.

Enter FAULKLAND.

Capt. Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again: you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Capt. Faith, much as they were.

Faulk. Nay then, you trifle too long. If you are sure of her, propose to the aunt in your own character, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Capt. Softly, softly; for though I am convinced my little Lydia would clope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side. Well, but, Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Capt. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover! Do love like a man.

Faulk. Ah, Jack! your heart and soul are not like mine, fixed immutably on one only object. You throw for a large stake, but losing—you could stake and throw again; but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Capt. But, for heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand? I fear for

her spirits, her health, her life. O Jack! when delicate and feeling souls are separated there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Capt. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not. So then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well, and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure; I am anxious only for that.

Capt. Then cure your anxiety at once. Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack, don't trifle with me.

Capt. She is arrived here with my father, within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Capt. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind. Seriously then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear Jack, now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Capt. Stay, Mr. Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her. Fag, show the gentleman up. *[Exit Fag.]*

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Capt. Oh, very intimate. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's; for he does not think his friend, Captain Absolute, ever saw the lady in question; and it is ridiculous enough to hear him com-

rumblante, and quiverante! There was this time month—odds minims and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert! [*Sings.*] *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her.

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifle! Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and balladmonger of a circle! to sooth her light heart with catches and glees! What can you say to this, sir?

Capt. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not.

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Capt. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as sings.

Acres. Ay, truly does she—there was at last race ball—

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there! I told you so! I told you so! Oh, she thrives in my absence! Dancing!

Capt. For heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so! Suppose she has danced, what then? Does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say, for form's sake. I say, Mr.—Mr.—What's his damned name?

Capt. Acres, Acres.

Faulk. Oh, ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet, eh?

Acres. Oh, I dare ensure her for that! But what I was going to speak of was her country-dancing: odds swimmin'g! she has such an air with her—

Faulk. Now, disappointment on her! Defend this,

Absolute! why dont you defend this? Country dances! jigs and reels! Am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country-dances! Zounds! had she made one in a cotillon, I believe I could have forgiven even that: but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies! to show paces, like a managing filly! Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country-dance; and even then the rest of the couples should be her great-uncles and aunts!

Capt. Ay, to be sure; grandfathers and grandmothers.

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain! I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [Going.]

Capt. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. Damn his news! [Exit.]

Capt. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Faulkland! Five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wasn't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Capt. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You dont say so? Ha, ha! jealous of me! that's a good joke!

Capt. There's nothing strange in that, Bob. Let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating

manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha, ha! mischief—ha, ha! But you know I am not my own property; my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly; but, odds frogs and tambours! I shant take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master. I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock, and render my leather breeches incapable. My hair has been in training some time.

Capt. Indeed!

Acres. Ay—and though the side curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Capt. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not!

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then, if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Capt. Spoke like a man. But pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

Acres. Ha, ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it? I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment; so that to swear with propriety, says my little major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense;" and this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha, ha, ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Capt. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete. Dammes have had their day.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you. Shall I show him into the parlour?

Capt. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone—

Capt. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Capt. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly?

[Exit Fag.]

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony. I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Capt. That I will, with all my heart. *[Exit Acres.]* Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well! Your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir A. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack. What, you are recruiting here, eh?

Capt. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

Sir A. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business. Jack, I have been consider-

ing that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Capt. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

Sir A. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Capt. Sir, you are very good.

Sir A. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world. I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Capt. Sir, your kindness overpowers me. Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir A. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses!

Capt. My wife, sir!

Sir A. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Capt. A wife, sir, did you say?

Sir A. Ay, a wife. Why, did not I mention her before?

Capt. Not a word of her, sir.

Sir A. Odd so! I mustn't forget her though. Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference?

Capt. Sir, sir! you amaze me!

Sir A. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Capt. I was, sir. You talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir A. Why, what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Capt. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir A. What's that to you, sir? Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

Capt. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir A. I am sure, sir, 't is more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Capt. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Hark ye, Jack; I have heard you for some time with patience; I have been cool, quite cool; but take care. You know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led—when I have my own way; but dont put me in a frenzy.

Capt. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Now, damn me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Capt. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir A. Sir, I wont hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod, and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you dont, by—

Capt. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness! to—

Sir A. Zounds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder—she shall be as crooked as the Crescent—her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum—she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—

SCENE II. *The North Parade.**Enter* LUCY.

Lucy. So I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute—however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Delia, as he calls her: I wonder he's not here!—

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. Ha! my little ambassadress—upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

Lucy. [*Speaking simply.*] O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir L. 'Faith! may be that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out, and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir L. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir L. I' faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed—well, let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. [*Gives him a letter.*]

Sir L. [*Reads.*] *Sir,—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the*

commotion I felt at the first superfluous views of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Very pretty, upon my word. Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. Yours, while meretricious, DELIA.

Upon my conscience, Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language! Faith! she's quite the queen of the dictionary!

Lucy. Ay, sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir L. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. Oh, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir L. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—though she is rather an arbitrary writer too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah, Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir L. Oh, tell her, I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain! But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent, and do everything fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wasn't rich enough to be so nice.

Sir L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it! I am so poor, that I cant afford to do a dirty action. If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure. However, my pretty girl [*gives her money*], here's a little something to buy you a riband; and meet me in the evening, and I will give you an answer to

this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind. *[Kisses her.]*

Lucy. O lud, Sir Lucius; I never seed such a gemman! My lady wont like you if you're so impudent.

Sir L. Faith she will, Lucy! That same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir L. Ah then, you baggage, I'll make it a truth presently. *[Kisses her.]*

Lucy. For shame now! Here is some one coming.

Sir L. O faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[Sees Fag. Exit, humming a tune.]

Enter FAG.

Fag. So, so, ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud! now, Mr. Fag, you flurry one so!

Fag. Come, come, Lucy; here's no one by, so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please. You play false with us, madam. I saw you give the baronet a letter. My master shall know this, and if he dont call him out, I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton. She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. How! what tastes some people have! Why. I suppose I have walked by her window a hundred times. But what says our young lady? Any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr Fag. A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so; I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, faith! Good-bye, Lucy; I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well, you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you. [*Going.*] But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear—never fear.

Lucy. Be sure, bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The North Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed. Whimsical enough, faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with. He must not know of my connection with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters. However, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed; but I can assure him it is very sincere. So, so, here he comes; he looks plaguy gruff. [*Steps aside.*]

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Sir A. No; I'll die sooner than forgive him! Die, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting his impudence had almost put me out of temper. An obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy. Who can he take after? This is my return for

getting him before all his brothers and sisters; for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment; and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him; he's anybody's son for me; I never will see him more; never, never, never, never!

Capt. Now for a penitential face!

Sir A. Fellow, get out of my way.

Capt. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir A. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Capt. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir A. What's that?

Capt. I have been revolving and reflecting and considering on your past goodness and kindness and condescension to me.

Sir A. Well, sir?

Capt. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention, concerning duty and obedience and authority.

Sir A. Well, puppy?

Capt. Why then, sir, the result of my reflections is a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir A. Why now you talk sense, absolute sense! I never heard anything more sensible in my life. Confound you, you shall be Jack again!

Capt. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir A. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Capt. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir A. Worcestershire, no! Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Capt. Malaprop! Languish! I dont remember ever to have heard of the names before. Yet stay, I think I do recollect something. Languish—Languish! She squints, dont she? A little red-haired girl?

Sir A. Squints! A red-haired girl! Zounds, no!

Capt. Then I must have forgot. It cant be the same person.

Sir A. Jack, Jack, what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Capt. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent. If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir A. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love. Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! so deeply-blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! Oh, Jack, lips, smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness! Then, Jack, her neck! Oh, Jack, Jack!

Capt. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece or the aunt?

Sir A. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket. The aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched anything old or ugly to gain an empire.

Capt. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir A. To please my father! Zounds! not to please— Oh, my father! Oddso! yes, yes; if my father indeed had desired; that's quite another matter. Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Capt. I dare say not, sir.

Sir A. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Capt. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 't is all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind. Now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back; and though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir A. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! a vile, insensible stock! You a soldier! You're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on. Odds life, I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Capt. I am entirely at your disposal, sir. If you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt? or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady, 't is the same to me, I'll marry the niece.

Sir A. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite or—but come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie; I'm sure it must. Come now; damn your demure face! Come, confess, Jack, you have been lying, haven't you? You
— been playing the hypocrite, eh? I'll never for-

give you if you haven't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Capt. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir A. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. JULIA'S Dressing-room.

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come! How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions! I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA.

Julia. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

Julia. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can

make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered something of coldness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health. Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Julia. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill. You must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire; on your mirth—your singing—dancing—and I know not what! For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment, in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Julia. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia. No, no, I am happy if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth,—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Julia. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Julia. If ever, without such cause from you as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

Faulk. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia: perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Julia. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality. To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding were only to esteem me! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Julia. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now, this is not well from you, Julia; I despise person in a man, yet, if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Ethiop you'd think none so fair.

Julia. I see you are determined to be unkind—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Julia. Then try me now. Let us be free as strangers as to what is past. My heart will not feel more liberty.

Faulk. There, now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not lose your hold, even though I wished it! —

Julia. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it!

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you: if I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on; my fortune such as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Julia. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but, as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given you no cause for this! *[Exit in tears.]*

Faulk. In tears! stay, Julia—stay but for a moment— The door is fastened! Julia, my soul! but for one moment! I hear her sobbing! Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay—Ay, she is coming now: how little resolution there is in a woman! how a few soft words can turn them! No, zounds! she's not coming, nor dont intend it, I suppose. This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness! 'twas barbarous and unmanly! I should be ashamed to see her now. I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again may I lose her for ever! *[Exit.]*

SCENE III. MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

MRS. MALAPROP, *with a letter in her hand*, and
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, Captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation; but from

the ingenuity of your appearance I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Capt. Permit me to say, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, Captain, you'll be seated. [*Sits.*] Ah! few gentlemen, nowadays, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman. Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower of beauty!

Capt. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit till time has robbed them of the more specious blossom; few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the orange tree, are rich in both at once.

Mrs. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breeding. He is the very pineapple of politeness! [*Aside.*] You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eavesdropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows anything of.

Capt. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before! I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account, but it must be very distressing, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree! I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but, behold, this very day I have interceded another letter from the fellow; I believe I have it in my pocket.

Capt. Oh, the devil! my last note! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. Ay, here it is.

Capt. Ay, my note, indeed! Oh, the little traitress, Lucy! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. There, perhaps you know the writing.

[*Gives him the letter.*

Capt. I think I have seen the hand before; yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.

Mrs. M. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Capt. [Reads.] *My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!* Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. M. Tender! ay, and profane too, o' my conscience!

Capt. *I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival—*

Mrs. M. That's you, sir.

Capt. *Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour.* Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so!

Capt. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. M. But go on, sir; you'll see presently.

Capt. *As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon, who guards you—*Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. M. Me, sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Capt. *Impudent scoundrel!—it shall go hard, but I will elude her vigilance; as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she dont understand—*

Mrs. M. There, sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my words of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure, if I

reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Capt. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—*same ridiculous vanity*—

Mrs. M. You need not read it again, sir!

Capt. I beg pardon, ma'am—*does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration—an impudent coxcomb—so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews.* Was ever such assurance?

Mrs. M. Did you ever hear anything like it? He'll elude my vigilance, will he? Yes, yes! ha, ha! he's very likely to enter these doors! We'll try who can plot best.

Capt. So we will, ma'am, so we will. Ha, ha, ha! a conceited puppy! ha, ha, ha! Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape; while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme: never was anything better perpetrated.

Capt. But, pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now? I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I dont know—I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

Capt. O lord, she wont mind me! only tell her Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir!

Capt. Gently, good tongue!

[*Aside.*

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

Capt. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below; she'd come down fast enough then—ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. 'T would be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha, ha! Let him if he can, I say again. Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews! ha, ha, ha! Come down, I say, Lydia; I don't wonder at your laughing—ha, ha, ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Capt. 'T is very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am!—ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is; she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Capt. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, Captain, your servant. Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes! Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Capt. Ha, ha, ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security; but such is Lydia's caprice, that to undeceive were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me.

[Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures.]

Enter LYDIA.

Lydia. What a scene am I now to go through! Surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed, in behalf of their favoured lover, to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival, an officer too! but, oh,

how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he dont begin; truly, he seems a very negligent wooer! quite at his ease, upon my word! I'll speak first. Mr. Absolute!

Capt. Ma'am.

[Turns round.

Lydia. O heavens, Beverley!

Capt. Hush, hush, my life! Softly! be not surprised!

Lydia. I am so astonished, and so terrified, and so overjoyed! For heaven's sake, how came you here?

Capt. Briefly, I have deceived your aunt; I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

Lydia. Oh, charming! And she really takes you for young Absolute?

Capt. Oh, she's convinced of it!

Lydia. Ha, ha, ha! I cant forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is overreached.

Capt. But we trifle with our precious moments; such another opportunity may not occur. Then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserving persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for my reward.

Lydia. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth—that burden on the wings of love?

Capt. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love—it will be generous in you, Lydia; for well you know it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lydia. How persuasive are his words! how charming will poverty be with him!

Capt. By heavens, I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene

where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say the world affords no smile to me but here.

[*Embracing her.*]

Lydia. Now could I fly with him to the antipodes; but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening.

Mrs. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. [Aside.]

Capt. So pensive, Lydia! Is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. M. Warmth abated? So, she has been in a passion, I suppose.

Lydia. No, nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs. M. An ill-tempered little devil! She'll be in a passion all her life, will she?

Lydia. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. M. I am astonished at her assurance! To his face, this to his face!

Capt. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit.

[*Kneeling.*]

Mrs. M. Ay—poor young man! down on his knees, entreating for pity! I can contain no longer. Why, thou vixen, I have overheard you!

Capt. Oh, confound her vigilance! [Aside.]

Mrs. M. Captain Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Capt. So—all's safe, I find. [Aside.] I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady—

Mrs. M. Oh, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! She's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile.

Lydia. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. M. Why, thou unblushing rebel, didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better? Didn't you say you never would be his?

Lydia. No, madam, I did not.

Mrs. M. Good heavens, what assurance! Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller, Beverley—possessed your heart? Tell me that, I say.

Lydia. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—

Mrs. M. Hold! hold, assurance! you shall not be so rude.

Capt. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech: she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. M. You are too good, Captain—too amiably patient; but come with me, miss—let us see you again soon, Captain—remember what we have fixed.

Capt. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lydia. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev—

Mrs. M. Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt severally. Capt. Absolute kissing his hand to Lydia, Mrs. Malaprop stopping her speaking.*]

SCENE IV. ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID discovered: ACRES as just dressed.

Acres. Indeed, David—dress does make a difference, David.

David. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain th-

old lady wouldn't know you : Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard preserve me!" our dairymaid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

David. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me.

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

David. I'll call again, sir.

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the post-office.

David. I will. By the mass, I cant help looking at your head! If I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself! [Exit.

ACRES comes forward, practising a dancing step.

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee. Confound the first inventors of cotillons, say I! they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough when I am forced, and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance. Odds jigs and tabors! I never valued your cross-over two couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country—but these outlandish, heathen allemandes and cotillons are quite beyond me! I shall never prosper at them, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they dont understand their cursed French lingo! their *pàs* this, and *pàs* that, and *pàs* other!

Enter DAVID.

David. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in. [*Exit David.*]

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last! In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir L. Pray, what is the case? I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius. I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir L. Very ill, upon my conscience! Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter. She has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath. Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir L. A rival in the case, is there? And you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir L. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship!

Acres. Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius! I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him and not know it? But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

Sir L. What the devil signifies right when your honour is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broadswords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching! I certainly do feel a kind of valour arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say—odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir L. Ah! my little friend, if I had Blunderbuss Hall here, I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Rooms, every one of whom had kilied his man! For though

the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls and barrels! Say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast! Zounds! as the man in the play says, "I could do such deeds——"

Sir L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage. Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits down to write.*] I would the ink were red! Indite, I say, indite! How shall I begin! Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir L. Pray, compose yourself.

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme?

Sir L. Pho, pho! do the thing decently and like a Christian. Begin now—Sir——

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir L. To prevent the confusion that might arise——

Acres. Well——

Sir L. From our both addressing the same lady——

Acres. Ay, there's the reason—same lady—Well——

Sir L. I shall expect the honour of your company——

Acres. Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner!

Sir L. Pray, be easy.

Acres. Well, then, honour of your company——

Sir L. To settle our pretensions——

Acres. Well—

Sir L. Let me see—ay, King's Mead Fields will do—in King's Mead Fields.

Acres. So, that's done. Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

Sir L. You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 't will be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir L. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening. I would' do myself the honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with that gentleman to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life, I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson!

Sir L. I shall be very proud of instructing you. Well, for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do everything in a mild and agreeable manner. Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID.

David. Then, by the mass, sir, I would do nò such thing! ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight when I wasn't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't?

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

David. Ay, by the mass! and I would be very careful of it; and I think, in return, my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

David. I say, then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman. Look ye, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me); well, my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. So—we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him (the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it? why, my honour. But put the case that he kills me! By the mass, I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David, in that case! Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave!

David. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Zounds! David, you are a coward! It doesn't become my valour to listen to you. What, shall

I disgrace my ancestors? Think of that, David, think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

David. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye now, master, to go to them in such haste, with an ounce of lead in your brains, I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now you dont think there is such very, very, very great danger, eh! Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

David. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you! Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his damned double-barrelled swords and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think o't—those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide them! from a child I never could fancy them! I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Zounds! I wont be afraid—odds fire and fury! you shant make me afraid. Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

David. Ay, i' the name of mischief, let him be the messenger. For my part I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it dont look like another letter! it is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter, and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch! Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off.

Acres. Out, you poltroon! you havn't the valour of a grasshopper.

David. Well, I say no more; 't will be sad news, to

be sure, at 'Clod Hall! but I ha' done. How Phillis will howl when she hears of it! ~~an~~ poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! and I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born!

[*Whimpering.*]

Acres. It wont do, David; I am determined to fight, so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

David. Good-bye, master.

[*Whimpering.*]

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven!

[*Exit David.*]

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead! If I hadn't the valour of St. George, and the dragon to boot —

Capt. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh, there! — [*Gives him the challenge.*]

Capt. [*To Ensign Beverley.*] So what's going on now! [*Aside.*] Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Capt. Indeed! Why, you wont fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. Egad, but I will, Jack. Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Capt. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Capt. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Capt. Not in the least; I beg you wont mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind. What it is to have a friend! you couldn't be my second, could you, Jack?

Capt. Why no, Bob, not in this affair; it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend, Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Capt. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the Captain.

Capt. I'll come instantly. Well, my little hero, success attend you. *[Going.]*

Acres. Stay, stay, Jack. If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow, will you, Jack?

Capt. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog, eh, Bob?

Acres. Ay, do, do; and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Capt. I will, I will. I'll say you are called in the country "Fighting Bob."

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I dont want to take his life if I clear my honour.

Capt. No! That's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you dont wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

Capt. No, upon my soul; I do not. But a devil of a fellow, eh? *[Going.]*

Acres. True, true. But stay—stay, Jack; you may add that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

Capt. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog.

Capt. Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob."

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. MRS. MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.*

MRS. MALAPROP and LYDIA.

Mrs. M. Why, thou perverse one, tell me what you can object to him? Isn't he a handsome man? tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lydia. She little thinks whom she is praising.
[*Aside.*] So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. M. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

Lydia. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. M. Then he's so well bred; so full of alacrity and adulation! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play: "Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself—an eye, like March, to threaten at command—a station, like Harry Mercury, new"—Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lydia. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake.

[*Aside.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Show them up here. [*Exit Servant.*]
Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lydia. Madam, I have told you my resolution. I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I wont even speak to or look at him.

[Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.]

Enter SIR ANTHONY and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir A. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop, come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty, and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow. I dont know what 's the matter, but if I had not held him by force, he 'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. M. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! *Lydia,* *Lydia,* rise, I beseech you—pay your respects!

[Aside to her.]

Sir A. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice and my alliance. Now, Jack, speak to her.

[Aside to him.]

Capt. What the devil shall I do? *[Aside.]* You see, sir, she wont even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she wouldn't; I told you so. Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together.

[Captain Absolute seems to expostulate with his father.]

Lydia. *[Aside.]* I wonder I havn't heard my aunt exclaim yet; sure she cant have looked at him! perhaps their regimentals are alike, and she is something blind.

Sir A. I say, sir, I wont stir a foot yet.

Mrs. M. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small. Turn round, *Lydia,* I blush for you!

[Aside to her.]

Sir A. May I not flatter myself that Miss Languish

will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son? Why dont you begin, Jack? Speak, you puppy, speak!

[*Aside to him.*

Mrs. M. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has. Answer, hussy! Why dont you answer?

[*Aside to her.*

Sir A. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness. Zounds, sirrah, why dont you speak?

[*Aside to him.*

Capt. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! [*Absolute attempts to speak, then returns to Sir Anthony.*] Faith, sir, I am so confounded—and so—so—confused! I told you I should be so, sir; I knew it. The—the tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir A. But it dont take away your voice, fool, does it? Go up and speak to her directly. [*Absolute makes signs to Mrs. Malaprop to leave them together.*] What the devil are you at? Unlock your jaws, sirrah, or——

[*Aside to him.*

Capt. [*Draws near Lydia.*] Now, heaven send she may be too sullen to look round! I must disguise my voice. [*Aside. Speaks in a low, hoarse tone.*] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not——

Sir A. What the devil ails the fellow? Why dont you speak out, not stand croaking like a frog in a quincey?

Capt. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—my modesty, quite choke me!

Sir A. Ah! your modesty again! I'll tell you what Jack, if you dont speak out directly, and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage! Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front. [*Mrs. Malaprop seems to chide Lydia.*

Capt. So! all will out, I see! [*Goes up to Lydia, speaks softly.*] Be not surprised, my Lydia; suppress all surprise at present.

Lydia. [*Aside.*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice! [*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*] Is this possible? My Beverley! how can this be—my Beverley?

Capt. Ah! 'tis all over! [*Aside.*]

Sir A. Beverley! the devil—Beverley! What can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. M. For shame, hussy! for shame! Your head runs so on that fellow that you have him always in your eyes. Beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

Lydia. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley.

Sir A. Zounds, the girl's mad! her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. M. O' my conscience, I believe so! What do you mean by Beverley, hussy? You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lydia. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley—

Sir A. Oh, she's as mad as Bedlam! or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick? Come here, sirrah; who the devil are you?

Capt. Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir A. Are you my son or not? Answer for your mother, you dog, if you wont for me.

Capt. Ye powers of impudence, befriend me! [*Aside.*] Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown. Mrs. Malprop, I am your most respectful admirer—and shall be

proud to add, affectionate nephew. I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lydia. So there will be no elopement after all!

[*Sullenly.*

Sir A. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Capt. Oh, you flatter me, sir, you compliment! 'Tis my modesty, you know, sir—my modesty—that has stood in my way.

Sir A. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however. I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am. So this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience! I thought it was damned sudden. You never heard their names before, not you! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire, eh? If you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired! Ah! you dissembling villain! What! [*Pointing to Lydia*] she squints, dont she?—a little red-haired girl!—eh? Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you arn't ashamed to hold up your head!

Capt. 'Tis with difficulty, sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. M. Oh, lud! Sir Anthony, a new light breaks in upon me! eh! how! what! Captain, did you write the letters then? What! am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of "an old weather-beaten she-dragon"—eh? Oh, mercy! was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Capt. Dear sir, my modesty will be overpowered at

last if you dont assist me. I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

Sir A. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive; odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant! eh, Mrs. Malaprop? Come, we must leave them together, Mrs. Malaprop; they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant. Jack, isn't the cheek as I said, eh? and the eye, you rogue! and the lip—eh? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness; theirs is the time of life for happiness! *Youth's the season made for joy.* [*Sings.*] Eh? Odds life! I'm in such spirits, I dont know what I could not do! Permit me, ma'am. [*Gives his hand to Mrs. Malaprop. Sings.*] *Tol de rol!* Gad I should like to have a little fooling myself, *Tol de rol! de rol!*

[*Exit singing, and handing Mrs. Malaprop.*]

LYDIA sits sullenly in the chair.

Capt. So much thought bodes me no good. [*Aside.*] So grave, Lydia!

Lydia. Sir!

Capt. So! egad! I thought as much! That damned monosyllable has froze me! [*Aside.*] What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows!

Lydia. Friends' consent indeed! [*Peevishly.*]

Capt. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little wealth and comfort may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as——

Lydia. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Capt. Nay, then we will not wait for their lingering ~~forms~~ but instantly procure the license, and——

Lydia. The license! I hate license!

Capt. Oh, my love, be not so unkind! Thus let me entreat—— [*Kneeling.*

Lydia. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you?

Capt. [*Rising.*] Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you. If I have lost your heart, I resign the rest. Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do. [*Aside.*

Lydia. [*Rising.*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud. What! you have been treating me like a child! humouring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Capt. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear——

Lydia. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all, behold, my hopes are to be crushed at once by my aunt's consent and approbation, and I am myself the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in a heat.*] But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture: [*taking a miniature from her bosom*] which I have worn night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties! There, sir, [*flings it to him*] and, be assured, I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Capt. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that—here, [*taking out a picture*] here is Miss Lydia Languish. What a difference! ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes! Those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar! and there the half-resentful blush, that would have checked the

ardour of my thanks. Well, all that's past—all over indeed! There, madam, in beauty, that copy is not equal to you; but in my mind its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I'll put it in my pocket. *[Puts it up again.]*

Lydia. *[Softening.]* 'Tis your own doing, sir—I—I—I suppose you are perfectly satisfied?

Capt. Oh, most certainly! Sure now this is much better than being in love! ha, ha, ha! there's some spirit in this! What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises? all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say that miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that; or perhaps they may be illnatured enough to hint that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but dont let that fret you.

Lydia. There's no bearing this insolence.

[Bursts into tears.]

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY.

Mrs. M. *[Entering.]* Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lydia. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! *[Sobbing.]*

Sir A. What the devil's the matter now! Zounds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard! But what the deuce is the meaning of it? I'm quite astonished!

Capt. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy! I am quite analyzed, for my part! Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lydia. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

Sir A. Zounds! I shall be in a frenzy! Why, Jack, you are not come out to be anyone else, are

Mrs. M. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there? You are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Capt. You'll not let me speak. I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lydia. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—there is the man. I now obey you; for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever.

[*Exit Lydia.*]

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy and miracles! what a turn here is! Why sure, Captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! ha, ha, ha! now I see it. Ha, ha, ha! now I see it. You have been too lively, Jack.

Capt. Nay, sir, upon my word——

Sir A. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 't was so. Come, no excuses, Jack. Why, your father, you rogue, was so before you. The blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

Capt. By all that's good, sir——

Sir A. Zounds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop—you must tell her 't is Jack's way—tell her 't is all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come away, Jack, ha, ha, ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain! [*Pushes him out.*]

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! oh, fie, Captain!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III. *The North Parade.*

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself. Upon my conscience, these officers are always in one's way in love affairs. I remember I might have

married Lady Dorothy Carmine if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get sight of me! And I wonder what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah, isn't that the Captain coming? Faith, it is! There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow that is mighty provoking. Who the devil is he talking to? *[Steps aside.]*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. To what fine purposes have I been plotting! a noble reward for all the schemes, upon my soul! a little gipsy! I did not think her so damned absurd neither. Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in all my life! I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir L. Oh, faith, I'm in the luck of it! I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose; to be sure I'm just come in the nick! Now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. *[Sir Lucius goes up to Absolute.]* With regard to that matter, Captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Capt. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant; because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir L. That's no reason; for, give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Capt. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of ~~winning~~ controversy.

Sir L. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Capt. Hark ye, Sir Lucius, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir L. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension. [*Bowing.*] You have named the very thing I would be at.

Capt. Very well, sir, I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations; but I should be glad you would please to examine your motives.

Sir L. Pray, sir, be easy. The quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands; we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short, or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

Capt. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir L. Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it is the same to you, Captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead Fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

Capt. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we shall discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir L. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it wont do for a long shot. So that matter is settled, and my mind's at ease.

[*Exit.*]

Enter FAULKLAND, meeting CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Capt. Well met. I was going to look for you. Oh, Faulkland, all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed, that if I had not the prospect of a resource, in being knocked on the head by-and-by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean? Has Lydia changed her mind? I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Capt. Ay, just as the eyes do of a person who squints. When her love-eye was fixed on me—t'other, her eye of duty, was finely obliqued; but when duty bid her point that the same way, off t'other turned on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown.

Faulk. But what's the resource you—

Capt. Oh, to wind up the whole, Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock. 'Tis on that account I wished to see you; you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure. Sir Lucius shall explain himself, and I dare say matters may be accommodated; but this evening, did you say? I wish it had been any other time.

Capt. Why? There will be light enough; there will (as Sir Lucius says) "be very pretty small-sword light, though it will not do for a long shot." Confound his long shots!

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled by a difference I have had with Julia. My vile, tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Capt. By heavens, Faulkland, you dont deserve her!

Enter SERVANT; gives FAULKLAND a letter.

Faulk. Oh, Jack, this is from Julia! I dread to open it.

Capt. Here, let me see. [*Takes the letter and opens it.*] Ay, a final sentence indeed! 'Tis all over with you, faith!

Faulk. Nay, Jack, dont keep me in suspense.

Capt. Hear then.

As I am convinced that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you as soon as possible.

Yours, ever and truly, JULIA.

There's stubbornness and resentment for you! [*Gives him the letter.*] Why, man, you dont seem one whit the happier at this.

Faulk. Oh, yes, I am—but—

Capt. Confound your buts! You never hear anything that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately damn it with a but!

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—dont you think there is something forward, something indelicate, in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation; that should always come from us. They should retain their coldness till wooed to kindness; and their pardon, like their love, should "not, unsought, be won."

Capt. I have not patience to listen to you; thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters. Let me see you before six, remember, at my lodgings. A poor industrious devil like me, who have toiled and drudged, and plotted to

gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people's folly, may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little; but a captious sceptic in love, a slave to fretfulness and whim, who has no difficulties but of his own creating, is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion. *[Exit.]*

Faulk. I feel his reproaches; yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which he tramples on the thorns of love. His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head which I will instantly pursue; I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness. If her love prove pure and sterling ore my name will rest on it with honour; and, once I've stamped it there, I'll lay aside my doubts for ever! *[Exit.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I. JULIA'S Dressing-room.

JULIA.

Julia. How this message has alarmed me! What dreadful accident can he mean? Why such charge to be alone? Oh, Faulkland, how many unhappy moments, how many tears, have you cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND.

What means this? Why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell.

Julia. Heavens! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited! Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me. I left you fretful and

passionate ; an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel ; the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly ! Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment.

Julia. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune. Had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian. I now entrust my person to your honour ; we will fly together. When safe from pursuit my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows and tenderest comforter.

Faulk. O Julia, I am bankrupt in gratitude ! Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you, beside his solitary love ?

Julia. I ask not a moment. No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself : and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love. But let us not linger, perhaps this delay——

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark : yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition !

Julia. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act ? I know not whether 't is so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy. The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

Julia. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you; one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Julia. Has no such disaster happened as you related.

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of heaven, receive my future guide and mistress, and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration.

Julia. Hold, Faulkland! that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, heaven knows, how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By heavens, Julia! —

Julia. Yet hear me. My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me. In his presence I pledged my hand, joyfully pledged it, where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as

my affection. Hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

Faulk. I confess it all! yet bear—

Julia. After such a year of trial I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction I never will be yours.

Faulk. Nay, but, Julia, by my soul and honour! if, after this—

Julia. But one word more. As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity, and the dearest blessing I can ask of heaven to send you will be to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity; and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world.

[*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone! for ever! There was an awful resolution in her manner that riveted me to my place. O fool! dolt! barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side! I must now haste to my appointment. Well, my mind is tuned for such a scene! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. O love! tormentor! fiend! whose influence,

like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! *[Exit.]*

Enter MAID and LYDIA.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now; perhaps she is only in the next room. *[Exit.]*

Lydia. Heigho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA.

Oh, Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation! Lud, child! what's the matter with you! You have been crying! I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Julia. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness. Something has flurried me a little. Nothing that you can guess at. I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister. *[Aside.]*

Lydia. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be!

Julia. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

Lydia. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one! but I don't care; I'll never have him.

Julia. Nay, Lydia —

Lydia. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last! There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements! so becoming a disguise! so amiable a ladder of ropes! Conscious moon, four horses, Scotch

parson, with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop! and such paragraphs in the newspapers! Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

Julia. I don't wonder at it.

Lydia. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's license, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish, to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster! Oh that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Julia. Melancholy indeed!

Lydia. How mortifying to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow! How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden stuck like a dripping statue! There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough, so pathetically! he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension! and while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour! Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Julia. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lydia. Oh, lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and DAVID.

Mrs. M. So, so! here's fine work! here's fine suicide, parricide, and simulation going on in the fields,

and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the anti-strophe!

Julia. For heaven's sake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

Lydia. Oh, patience! Do, ma'am, for heaven's sake, tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. M. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter! But he can tell you the perpendiculars.

David. Lookee, my lady. By the mass, there's mischief going on. Folks dont use to meet for amusement with firearms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-offices, and the devil knows what other crackers beside! This, my lady, I say has an angry favour. To be sure, Captain Absolute——

Julia. But who is engaged?

David. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, Squire Acres—and Captain Absolute. Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Julia. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie, it would be very inelegant in us! we should only participate things.

Lydia. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

David. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives; they are desperately given, believe me. Above all, there is that bloodthirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger! Oh, mercy! have they drawn poor little, dear Sir Lucius into the scrape! Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire patrifactions.

Lydia. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. M. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief! Here, friend, you can show us the place? Come, sir, lead the way, and we'll precede.

David. Oh, never fear! and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

All the Ladies. The pistols! Oh, let us fly!

[*Exeunt, David talking.*]

SCENE II. *King's Mead Fields.*

SIR LUCIUS and ACRES, *with Pistols.*

Acres. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

Sir L. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay, now—I'll show you. [*Measures paces along the stage.*] There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the further he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir L. Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards—

Sir L. Pho, pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no! by my valour, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot: a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

Sir L. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I dont understand——

Sir L. Why, you may think, there's no being shot at without a little risk—and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a *quietus* with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A *quietus*!

Sir L. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled, and sent home? or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled! Snug lying in the Abbey! Odds tremors, Sir Lucius, dont talk so!

Sir L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you were never engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir L. Ah! that's a pity; there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there [*Puts himself in an attitude*—a side-front, eh? Odd, I'll make myself small enough—I'll stand edgeways.

Sir L. Now, you're quite out; for if you stand so when I take my aim—— [*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Zounds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir L. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you dont know—it may go off of my head!

Sir L. Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part of your right side, 't will be very hard if it dont succeed on the left.

Acres. A vital part!

Sir L. But, there—fix yourself so—[*placing him*]—let me see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me! a ball or two clean through me!

Sir L. Ay; and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look ye, Sir Lucius, I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valour, I will stand edgeways.

Sir L. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they dont mean to disappoint us—hah! no, faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Eh? what? coming—

Sir L. Ay; who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them, indeed! Well—let them come—eh, Sir Lucius? we—we—we—we—wont run.

Sir L. Run!

Acres. No, I say—we wont run, by my valour!

Sir L. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I dont feel quite so bold somehow as I did.

Sir L. Oh, fie! consider your honour.

Acres. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honour.

Sir L. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you I should almost think I was afraid. If my valour should leave me! valour will come and go.

Sir L. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valour is certainly going? it is sneaking off! I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

Sir L. Your honour—your honour. Here they are.

Acres. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir L. Gentlemen, your most obedient—ha!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself, to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account?

Acres. What, Jack! my dear Jack! my dear friend!

Capt. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir L. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley—[*To Faulkland*—if you choose your weapons, the Captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

Sir L. What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir.

— *Sir L.* Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But

I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game, you wont be so cantankerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

Capt. Oh, pray, Faulkland, fight, to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter——

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian. Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir L. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I cant see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why, no, Sir Lucius, I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face. If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

Capt. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity——

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Absolute! Not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds, Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural!

Sir L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! odds backs and abettors, I'll be your second with all my heart; and if you should get a *quietus*, you may command me entirel~~y~~——

I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or anything of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir L. Pho, pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—coward may be said in joke—but if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls—

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Capt. Nay, Sir Lucius, you cant have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog—called in the country fighting Bob. He generally kills a man a week—dont you, Bob?

Acres. Ay—at home!—

Sir L. Well then, Captain, 'tis we must begin; so come out, my little counsellor, [*draws his sword*] and ask the gentleman whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him.

Capt. Come then, sir—[*draws*]—since you wont let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, and the LADIES.

David. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony—knock down my master in particular, and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir A. Put up, Jack, up, or I shall be in a frenzy. How came you in a duel, sir?

Capt. Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I. 'Twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his Majesty.

Sir A. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his Majesty! Zounds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Capt. Sir, I tell you that gentleman called me out without explaining his reasons.

Sir A. Gad, sir! how came you to call my son out without explaining your reasons?

Sir L. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir A. Zounds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies. Captain Absolute, come here. How could you intimidate us so? Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Capt. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced. Speak, child.

Sir L. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here—I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence. Now mark—

Lydia. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir L. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lydia. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Capt. Oh, my little angel, say you so? Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here. With

regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced that I should not fear to support a real injury, you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir A. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to anything in the world—and if I cant get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir L. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady—if she chooses to deny her own handwriting here——

[Takes out letters.]

Mrs. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery! Sir Lucius, perhaps there is some mistake—perhaps I can illuminate——

Sir L. Pray, old gentlewoman, dont interfere where you have no business. Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

Lydia. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[Lydia and Absolute walk aside.]

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my camelion blushes, I am Delia.

Sir L. You Delia—pho! pho! be easy.

Mrs. M. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke, those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your

condescension ; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you. And to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Capt. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius ; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir L. Ha ! little Valour—here, will you make your fortune ?

Acres. Odds wrinkles ! No. But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive ; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir A. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, dont be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony, men are all barbarians !

[All retire but Julia and Faulkland.]

Julia. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen. There was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me. Oh, woman, how true should be your judgment when your resolution is so weak !

Faulk. Julia, how can I sue for what I so little deserve ? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Julia. Oh, Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours. *[Sir Anthony comes forward.]*

Sir A. What's going on here ? So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant. Come, Julia, I never interfered before ; but let me have a hand in the matter at last. All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland seemed to proceed from what he calls the

delicacy and warmth of his affection for you. There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly! [*The rest come forward.*]

Sir L. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better——

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius. So, Jack, I wish you joy—Mr. Faulkland the same. Ladies, come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms, and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir A. Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack; I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Capt. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I——

Lydia. Was always obliged to me for it, eh? Mr. Modesty! But come, no more of that; our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Julia. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of happiness, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright

o be lasting. When hearts diffusing happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends most when its leaves are dropped!

EPILOGUE BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY.

LADIES, for you—I heard our poet say—
He'd try to coax some moral from his play :
"One moral's plain," cried I, "without more fuss ;
Man's social happiness all rests on us :
Through all the drama—whether damned or not—
Love gilds the scene, and women guide the plot.
From every rank obedience is our due—
D'ye doubt? The world's great stage shall prove it
true."

The Cit, well skilled to shun domestic strife,
Will sup abroad ; but first, he'll ask his wife :
John Trot, his friend, for once will do the same,
But then, he'll just step home to tell his dame.

The surly Squire at noon resolves to rule,
And half the day—Zounds! Madam is a fool!
Convinced at night, the vanquished victor says,
"Ah, Kate! you women have such coaxing ways!"

The jolly Toper chides each tardy blade,
Till reeling Bacchus calls on Love for aid :
Then with each toast he sees fair bumpers swim,
And kisses Chloe on the sparkling brim!

Nay, I have heard that Statesmen—great and wise—
Will sometimes counsel with a lady's eyes ;
The servile suitors watch her various face,
She smiles preferment, or she frowns disgrace,
Curtsies a pension here—there nods a place.

Nor with less awe, in scenes of humbler life,
Is viewed the mistress, or is heard the wife.
The poorest Peasant of the poorest soil,
The child of poverty, and heir to toil,
Early from radiant Love's impartial light
Steals one small spark to cheer his world of night :
Dear spark ! that oft through winter's chilling woes
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows.

The wandering Tar, who not for years has pressed
The widowed partner of his day of rest,
On the cold deck, far from her arms removed,
Still hums the ditty which his Susan loved ;
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The boatswain whistles in a softer tone.

The Soldier, fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the triumph of his Nancy's smile ;
But ere the battle should he list her cries,
The lover trembles, and the hero dies !
That heart, by war and honour steeled to fear,
Droops on a sigh, and sickens at a tear !

But ye more cautious, ye nice-judging few,
Who give to Beauty only Beauty's due,
Though friends to Love, ye view with deep regret
Our conquests marred, our triumphs incomplete,
Till polished Wit more lasting charms disclose,
And Judgment fix the darts which Beauty throws !

In female breasts did sense and merit rule,
The lover's mind would ask no other school ;
Shamed into sense, the scholars of our eyes,
Our beaux from gallantry would soon be wise ;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The lamp of Knowledge at the torch of Love !

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

A COMEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY PERFORMED AT DRURY-LANE.

SIR PETER TEAZLE	..	..	Mr. King.
SIR OLIVER SURFACE ..	..	..	Mr. Yates.
JOSEPH SURFACE	..	..	Mr. Palmer.
CHARLES .. ..	..	..	Mr. Smith.
CRABTREE .. ..	..	..	Mr. Parsons.
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE	..	..	Mr. Dodd.
ROWLEY .. ..	..	..	Mr. Aiken.
SIR TOBY BUMPER	..	..	Mr. Vernon.
MOSES .. ..	..	..	Mr. Baddeley.
CARELESS .. ..	..	..	Mr. Jefferson.
TRIP .. ..	..	..	Mr. Lamash.
SNAKE .. ..	..	..	Mr. Packer.
LADY TEAZLE .. ..	..	..	Mrs. Abington
MARIA .. ..	..	..	Mrs. Brereton.
LADY SNEERWELL	..	..	Mrs. Hopkins.
MRS. CANDOUR	..	..	Miss Pope.

SCENE: *London.*

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

A School for Scandal! Tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now—the knowing think—
We might as well be taught to eat and drink :
Caused by a dearth of Scandal, should the vapours
Distress our fair ones, let them read the papers ;
Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit,
Crave what they will, there's quantum sufficit.

"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just ris'n at noon, all night at cards, when threshing
Strong tea and Scandal—bless me, how refreshing!
"Give me the papers, Lisp—how bold and free! (sips)
Last night Lord L. (sips) was caught with Lady D.
For aching heads, what charming sal volatile! (sips)
If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,
We hope she 'll draw, or we 'll undraw, the curtain—
Fine satire! poz! in public all abuse it;
But, by ourselves (sips), our praise we cant refuse it.
Now, Lisp, read you—there at that dash and star."
"Yes, ma'am—a certain lord had best beware,
Who lives not many miles from Grosvenor Square;

For should he Lady W, find willing—
Wormwood is bitter.” “Oh, that's me—the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door.”

Thus at our friends we laugh who feel the dart,
To reach our feelings we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift the monster, there's no gagging:
Cut Scandal's head off—still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles, once lavishly bestowed,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road,
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks this Hydra, Scandal, in his den:
From his fell gripe the frightened fair to save—
Though he should fall, th' attempt must please the brave.
For your applause all perils he would through;
He'll fight—that's write—a cavaliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.



ACT I.

SCENE I. LADY SNEERWELL'S *House*.

LADY SNEERWELL and SNAKE *discovered at a tea-table.*

L. Sneer. The paragraphs you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted.

Snake. They were, madam; and as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion from whence they came.

L. Sneer. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish, in the common course of things. I think it must reach Mrs. Clacket's ears within twenty-four hours, and then the business, you know, is as good as done.

L. Sneer. Why, yes, Mrs. Clacket has talents, and a good deal of industry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day; to my knowledge she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons disinherited; of four forced elopements, as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances, and two

divorces; nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *titte-à-titte* in the *Town and Country Magazine*, when the parties never saw one another before in their lives.

L. Sneer. Why, yes, she has genius, but her manner is too gross.

Snake. True, madam, she has a fine tongue, and a bold invention; but then, her colouring is too dark, and the outlines rather too extravagant; she wants that delicacy of tint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguishes your ladyship's scandal.

L. Sneer. You are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the least; everybody will allow that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look than many others with the most laboured detail, even though they accidentally happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

L. Sneer. Yes, my dear Snake, and I'll not deny the pleasure I have at the success of my schemes (*both rise*). Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess nothing can give me greater satisfaction than reducing others to the level of my own injured reputation.

Snake. True, madam; but there is one affair, in which you have lately employed me, wherein I confess I am at a loss to guess at your motives.

L. Sneer. I presume you mean with regard to my friend Sir Peter Teazle, and his family.

Snake. I do; here are two young men to whom Sir Peter has acted as guardian since their father's death; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of; the youngest the most dissipated, wild, extravagant young fellow in the world; the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite; the latter attached to Maria,

Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly admired by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a large fortune, should not immediately close with the passion of a man of such character and expectation as Mr. Surface; and more so, why you are so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

L. Snear. Then at once, to unravel this mystery, I must inform you, that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

Snake. No!

L. Snear. No; his real views are to Maria, or her fortune, while in his brother he finds a favoured rival; he is, therefore, obliged to mask his real intentions, and profit by my assistance.

Snake. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself for his success.

L. Snear. Heavens! how dull you are! Cant you surmise a weakness I have hitherto, through shame, concealed even from you? Must I confess it, that Charles, that profligate, that libertine, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, that he it is for whom I am anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice every thing.

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent; but pray, how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

L. Snear. For our mutual interest: he pretends to, and recommends, sentiment and liberality; but I know him to be artful, close, and malicious. In short, a sentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and, indeed with most of his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of virtue, good sense, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes, I know Sir Peter ~~views~~ he has not his

fellow in England, and has praised him as a man of character and sentiment.

L. Sneer. Yes; and with the appearance of being sentimental, he has brought Sir Peter to favour his addresses to Maria, while poor Charles has no friend in the house, though I fear he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Surface, madam.

L. Sneer. Shew him up [*Exit Servant*]; he generally calls about this hour. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Lady Sneerwell, good morning to you——Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

L. Sneer. Snake has just been rallying me upon our attachment, but I have told him our real views; I need not tell you how useful he has been to us, and believe me, our confidence has not been ill placed.

Jos. Oh, madam, 't is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's merit and accomplishments.

L. Sneer. Oh, no compliments; but tell me when you saw Maria; or, what's more material to us, your brother.

Jos. I have not seen either since I left you, but I can tell you they never meet; some of your stories have had a good effect in that quarter.

L. Sneer. The merit of this, my dear Snake, belongs to you; but do your brother's distresses increase?

Jos. Every hour. I am told he had another execution in his house yesterday; in short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I ever heard.

L. Sneer. Poor Charles!

Yos. Aye, poor Charles, indeed! notwithstanding his extravagance, one cannot help pitying him. I wish it was in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not feel for the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves to be——

L. Sneer. Now you are going to be moral, and forget you are among friends.

Yos. Gad, so I was, ha! ha! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter, ha! ha! However, it would certainly be a generous act in you to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed at all, can only be so by a person of your superior accomplishments and understanding.

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming; I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to your ladyship. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

[*Exit.*

Yos. Mr. Snake, your most obedient. I wonder Lady Sneerwell would put any confidence in that fellow.

L. Sneer. Why so?

Yos. I have discovered he has of late had several conferences with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward; he has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

L. Sneer. And do you think he would betray us?

Yos. Not unlikely; and take my word for it, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow has not virtue enough to be faithful to his own villanies.

Enter MARIA.

L. Sneer. Ah, Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

Mar. Nothing, madam, only this odious lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, and his uncle Crabtree,

just called in at my guardian's; but I took the first opportunity to slip out, and run away to your ladyship.

L. Sneer. Is that all?

Yos. Had my brother Charles been of the party, you would not have been so much alarmed.

L. Sneer. Nay, now you are too severe; for I dare say the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here, and therefore came; but pray, Maria, what particular objection have you to Sir Benjamin that you avoid him so?

Mar. Oh, madam, he has done nothing; but his whole conversation is a perpetual libel upon all his acquaintance.

Yos. Yes, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him, for he would abuse a stranger as soon as his best friend, and his uncle is as bad.

Mar. For my part, I own wit loses its respect with me when I see it in company with malice; what think you, Mr. Surface?

Yos. To be sure, madam, to smile at a jest, that plants a thorn in the breast of another, is to become a principal in the mischief.

L. Sneer. Psha—there is no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature; the malice in a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What is your real opinion, Mr. Surface?

Yos. Why, my opinion is, that where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, the conversation must be naturally insipid.

Mar. Well, I will not argue how far slander may be allowed; but in a man, I am sure it is despicable. We have pride, envy, rivalry, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman, before he can traduce one.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Candour, madam, if you are at leisure, will leave her carriage.

L. Sneer. Desire her to walk up. [*Exit Servant.*] Now, Maria, here's a character to your taste; though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, yet everybody allows she is the best natured sort of woman in the world.

Mar. Yes, with the very gross affectation of good nature she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Jos. Faith, it's very true; and whenever I hear the current of abuse running hard against the character of my best friends, I never think them in such danger, as when candour undertakes their defence.

L. Sneer. Hush! hush! here she is.

Enter MRS. CANDOUR.

Mrs. Cand. Oh, my dear Lady Sneerwell! well, how do you do? Mr. Surface, your most obedient. Is there any news abroad? No! nothing good I suppose. No, nothing but scandal! nothing but scandal!

Jos. Just so indeed, madam.

Mrs. Cand. Nothing but scandal! Ah, Maria, how do you do, child? What! is everything at an end between you and Charles? What! is he too extravagant? Aye! the town talks of nothing else.

Mar. I am sorry, madam, the town is so ill employed.

Mrs. Cand. Aye, so am I, child; but what can one do? we cant stop people's tongues. They hint, too, that your guardian and his lady dont live so agreeably together as they did.

Mar. I am sure such reports are without foundation.

Mrs. Cand. Aye, so things generally are. It's like

Mrs. Fashion's affair with Colonel Coterie; though, indeed, that affair was never rightly cleared up; and it was but yesterday Miss Prim assured me, that Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon are now become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted, that a certain widow in the next street had got rid of her dropsy, and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner.

Yos. The licence of invention some people give themselves is astonishing.

Mrs. Cand. 'Tis so; but how will you stop people's tongues? 'Twas but yesterday Mrs. Clacket informed me, that our old friend Miss Prudely was going to elope, and that her guardian caught her just stepping into the York Diligence, with her dancing master. I was informed, too, that Lord Flimsy caught his wife at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Tom Saunter and Sir Harry Idle were to measure swords on a similar occasion. But I dare say there is no truth in the story, and I would not circulate such a report for the world.

Yos. You report! No, no, no.

Mrs. Cand. No, no,—tale-bearers are just as bad as tale-makers.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Benjamin Backbite and Mr. Crabtree.

[Exit Servant.]

Enter SIR BENJAMIN and CRABTREE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, your most obedient humble servant; Mrs. Candour, I believe you don't know my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite; he has a very pretty taste for poetry, and can make a rebus or a charade with any one.

Sir Benj. Oh fie! uncle.

Crab. In faith he will: did you ever hear the lines he made at Lady Ponto's rout, on Mrs. Frizzle's feathers catching fire; and the rebuses—his first is the name of a fish; the next a great naval commander, and—

Sir Benj. Uncle, now prythee.

L. Sneer. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir Benj. Why, to say the truth, 'tis very vulgar to print—and as my little productions are chiefly satires, and lampoons on particular persons, I find they circulate better by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties; however, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured by this lady's smiles [*To Maria*], I mean to give to the public.

Crab. Foregad, madam, they'll immortalize you [*To Maria*], you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir Benj. Yes, madam, I think you'll like them [*To Maria*], when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall murmur through a meadow of margin. Foregad, they'll be the most elegant things of their kind.

Crab. But, odso, ladies, did you hear the news?

Mrs. Cand. What—do you mean the report of—

Crab. No, madam, that's not it—Miss Nicely going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. Cand. Impossible!

Sir Benj. 'Tis very true indeed, madam; every thing is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoke.

Crab. Yes, and they do say there were very pressing reasons for it.

Mrs. Cand. I heard something of this before.

L. Sneer. Oh! it cannot be; and I wonder they'd report such a thing of so prudent a lady.

Sir Benj. Oh! but madam, that is the very reason

that it was believed at once; for she has always been so very cautious and reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Mrs. Cand. It is true, there is a sort of puny, sickly reputation, that would outlive the robuster character of a hundred prudes.

Sir Benj. True, madam; there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supplying their want of stamina by care and circumstances, have often given rise to the most ingenious tales.

Crab. Very true: but odso, ladies, did you hear of Miss Letitia Piper's losing her lover and her character at Scarborough? Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

Sir Benj. Oh, to be sure, the most whimsical circumstance.

L. Snee. Pray let us hear it.

Crab. Why, one evening, at Lady Spadille's assembly, the conversation happened to turn upon the difficulty of breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country; No, says a lady present, I have seen an instance of it, for a cousin of mine, Miss Letitia Piper, had one that produced twins. What, what, says old Lady Dundizry, (whom we all know is as deaf as a post) has Miss Letitia Piper had twins? This, you may easily imagine, set the company in a loud laugh; and the next morning it was everywhere reported, and believed, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Crab. 'Tis true, upon my honour. Oh, Mr. Surface, how do you do? I hear your uncle, Sir Oliver, is expected in town; sad news upon his arrival, to hear how your brother has gone on.

Yes. I hope no busy people have already prejudiced his uncle against him ; he may reform.

Sir Benj. True, he may ; for my part I never thought him so utterly void of principle as people say, and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of amongst the Jews.

Crab. Foregad, if the Old Jewry was a ward, Charles would be an alderman, for he pays as many annuities as the Irish Tontine ; and when he is sick they have prayers for his recovery in all the synagogues.

Sir Benj. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends, he can sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities, have a score of tradesmen waiting in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Yes. This may be entertaining to you, gentlemen ; but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Mar. Their malice is intolerable. [*Aside.*] Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning ; I'm not very well. [*Exit Maria.*]

Mrs. Cand. She changes colour.

L. Snear. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her.

Mrs. Cand. To be sure I will. Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be.

[*Mrs. Candour follows her.*]

L. Snear. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

Sir Benj. The young lady's penchant is obvious.

Crab. Come, dont let this dishearten you, follow her, and repeat some of your odes to her, and I'll assist you.

Sir Benj. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you, but depend on't, your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. Oh, undone as ever man was! cant raise a guinea.

Sir Benj. Everything is sold, I am told, that was moveable.

Crab. Not a moveable left, except some old bottles, and some pictures, and they seem to be framed in the wainscot, egad.

Sir Benj. I am sorry to hear also some bad stories of him.

Crab. Oh, he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir Benj. But, however, he's your brother.

Crab. Aye! as he's your brother we'll tell you more another opportunity.

[*Exeunt Crabtree and Sir Benjamin.*]

L. Sneer. 'Tis very hard for them, indeed, to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Yos. And I fancy their abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than to Maria.

L. Sneer. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this afternoon, so you may as well dine where you are; we shall have an opportunity of observing her further; in the mean time I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. SIR PETER TEAZLE'S House.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now above six months since my Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men, and I have been the most miserable dog ever since. We tiffed a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells were done ringing. I was more than

once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost every satisfaction in life, before my friends had done wishing me joy. And yet I chose with caution a girl bred wholly in the country, who had never known luxury beyond one silk gown, or dissipation beyond the annual gala of a race ball. Yet now she plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the town, with as good a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass plot out of Grosvenor Square. I am sneered at by all my acquaintance—paragraphed in the newspapers—she dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours. And yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this; but I am determined never to be weak enough to let her know it. No! no! no!

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Sir Peter, your servant; how do you find yourself to-day?

Sir Pet. Very bad, Mr. Rowley; very bad indeed.

Rowl. I'm sorry to hear that. What has happened to make you uneasy since yesterday?

Sir Pet. A pretty question truly to a married man.

Rowl. Sure my lady is not the cause!

Sir Pet. Why! has any one told you she is dead?

Rowl. Come, come, Sir Peter, notwithstanding you sometimes dispute and disagree, I am sure you love her.

Sir Pet. Aye, Mr. Rowley; but the worst of it is, that in all our disputes and quarrels, she is ever in the wrong, and continues to thwart and vex me; I am myself the sweetest tempered man in the world, and so I tell her an hundred times a-day.

Rowl. Indeed, Sir Peter!

Sir Pet. Yes, and then there's Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage her to.

disobedience; and Maria, my ward, she too presumes to have a will of her own, and refuses the man I propose to her; designing, I suppose, to bestow herself and fortune upon that profligate his brother.

Rowl. You know, Sir Peter, I have often taken the liberty to differ in opinion with you, in regard to these two young men; for Charles, my life on't, will retrieve all one day or other. Their worthy father, my once honoured master, at his years, was full as wild and extravagant as Charles now is; but at his death, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

Sir Pet. You are wrong, Master Rowley, you are very wrong: by their father's will, you know, I became guardian to these young men, which gave me an opportunity of knowing their different dispositions; but their uncle's liberality soon took them out of my power, by giving them an early independence. But for Charles, whatever good qualities he may have inherited, they are long since squandered away with the rest of his fortune; Joseph, indeed, is a pattern for the young men of his age—a youth of the noblest sentiments, and acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Rowl. Well, well, Sir Peter, I shant oppose your opinion at present, though I am sorry you are prejudiced against Charles, as this may probably be the most critical period of his life, for his uncle, Sir Oliver, is arrived, and now in town.

Sir Pet. What! my old friend, Sir Oliver, is he arrived? I thought you had not expected him this month.

Rowl. No more we did, sir, but his passage has been remarkably quick.

Sir Pet. I shall be heartily glad to see him. 'Tis sixteen years since old Noll and I met. But does he

still enjoin us to keep his arrival secret from his nephews?

Rowl. He does, sir; and is determined, under a feigned character, to make trial of their different dispositions.

Sir Pet. Ah! there is no need of it, for Joseph, I am sure, is the man. But hark'ye, Rowley, does Sir Oliver know that I am married?

Rowl. He does, sir, and intends shortly to wish you joy.

Sir Pet. What, as we wish health to a friend in a consumption; but I must have him at my house? do you conduct him, Rowley, I'll go and give orders for his reception. [*Going.*] We used to rail at matrimony together—he stood firm to his text. But, Rowley, dont give him the least hint that my wife and I disagree, for I would have him think (heaven forgive me) that we are a very happy couple.

Rowl. Then you must be careful not to quarrel whilst he is here.

Sir Pet. And so we must—but that will be impossible! Zounds, Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—aye, he deserves—No, the crime carries the punishment along with it.

ACT II.

SCENE I. SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER and LADY TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I wont bear it.

L. Teas. Very well, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, just as you please; but I know I ought to have my own way in everything, and what's more, I will.

Sir Pet. What, madam! is there no respect due to the authority of a husband?

L. Teas. Why, dont I know that no woman of fashion does as she is bid after her marriage. Though I was bred in the country, I am no stranger to that; if you wanted me to have been obedient you should have adopted me, and not married me—I'm sure you were old enough.

Sir Pet. Aye, there it is. Zounds, madam, what right have you to run into all this extravagance?

L. Teas. I am sure I am not more extravagant than a woman of quality ought to be.

Sir Pet. Slife, madam, I'll have no more sums squandered away upon such unmeaning luxuries; you have as many flowers in your dressing-room as would turn the pantheon into a green-house; or make a *fête-champêtre* at a mas—

L. Teas. Lord, Sir Peter, am I to blame that flowers dont blow in cold weather? you must blame the climate, and not me—I'm sure for my part I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet.

Sir Pet. Zounds, madam, I should not wonder at your extravagance if you had been bred to it. Had you any of these things before you married me?

L. Teas. Lord, Sir Peter, how can you be angry at those little elegant expenses?

Sir Pet. Had you any of those little elegant expenses when you married me?

L. Teas. For my part I think you ought to be pleased your wife should be thought a woman of taste.

Sir Pet. Zounds, madam, you had no taste when you married me.

L. Teas. Very true, indeed; and after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again.

Sir Pet. Very well, very well, madam; you have entirely forgot what your situation was when first I saw you.

L. Teas. No, no, I have not; a very disagreeable situation it was, or I am sure I never should have married you.

Sir Pet. You forget the humble state I took you from—the daughter of a poor country squire. When I came to your father's I found you sitting at your tambour in a linen gown, a bunch of keys at your side, and your hair combed smoothly over a roll.

L. Teas. Yes, I remember very well; my daily occupations were to overlook the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

Sir Pet. Oh, I am glad to find you have so good a recollection!

L. Teas. My evening employments were to draw patterns for ruffles, which I had no materials to make up, and play at Pope Joan with the curate, read a sermon to my aunt Deborah, or perhaps be stuck up at an old spinnet to thrum my father to sleep after a fox chase.

Sir Pet. Then you were glad to take a ride out behind the butler, upon the old docked coach horse.

L. Teas. No, no; I deny the butler and the coach horse.

Sir Pet. I say you did. This was your situation. Now, madam, you must have your coach, *vis-à-vis*, and three powdered footmen to walk before your chair; and in summer, two white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens; and instead of your living in that hole in the country, I have brought you home here, made you a woman of fortune and of quality—in short, madam, I have made you my wife.

L. Teas. Well, and there is but one thing more you can now do to add to the obligation, and that is——

Sir Pet. To make you my widow, I suppose.

L. Teas. Hem!——

Sir Pet. Very well, madam, very well; I am much obliged to you for the hint.

L. Teas. Why then will you force me to say shocking things to you? But now we have finished our morning conversation, I presume I may go to my engagements at Lady Sneerwell's.

Sir Pet. Lady Sneerwell! a precious acquaintance you have made here too, and the set that frequent her house. Such a set, mercy on us! Many a wretch who has been drawn upon a hurdle, has done less mischief than those barterers of forged lies, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

L. Teas. How can you be so severe? I'm sure they are all people of fashion, and very tenacious of reputation.

Sir Pet. Yes, so tenacious of it, they'll not allow it to any but themselves.

L. Teas. I vow, Sir Peter, when I say an ill natured thing, I mean no harm by it, for I take it for granted they'd do the same by me.

Sir Pet. They've made you as bad as any of them.

L. Teas. Yes, I think I bear my part with a tolerable grace——

Sir Pet. Grace indeed!

L. Teas. Well, but, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come.

Sir Pet. Well, I shall just call in to look after my own character.

L. Teas. Then, upon my word, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. [*Exit L. Teasle.*]

Sir Pet. I have got much by my intended exposu-

ation. What a charming air she has! what a neck! and how pleasingly she shows her contempt of my authority! Well, though I cant make her love me, 'tis some pleasure to teaze her a little, and I think she never appears to such advantage, as when she is doing everything to vex and plague me.

SCENE II. LADY SNEERWELL'S House.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN, JOSEPH, MRS. CANDOUR, and MARIA.

L. Sneer. Nay, positively we'll have it.

Yos. Aye, aye, the epigram by all means.

Sir Benj. Oh, plague on it, it's mere nonsense.

Crab. Faith, ladies, 't was excellent for an extempore.

Sir Benj. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstances. You must know that one day last week, as Lady Bab Curricule was taking the dust in Hyde Park in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocket-book, and in a moment produced the following:

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies,
Other horses are clowns, and these macaronies;
To give them this title I'm sure cant be wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies, done in the crack of a whip, and on horseback too.

Yos. Oh! a very Phœbus mounted—

Mrs. Cand. I must have a copy.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Sneer. Lady Teazle, how do you do? I hope we shall see Sir Peter.

L. Teas. I believe he will wait on your ladyship presently.

L. Sneer. Maria, my love, you look grave; come, you shall sit down to picquet with Mr. Surface.

Mar. I take very little pleasure in cards—but I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

L. Teas. I wonder he would sit down to cards with Maria. I thought he would have taken an opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Cand. Well, now I'll forswear his society.

[*Aside.*]

L. Teas. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour.

Mrs. Cand. Why, they are so censorious they wont allow our friend, Miss Vermilion, to be handsome.

L. Sneer. Oh, surely she's a pretty woman.

Crab. I'm glad you think so.

Mrs. Cand. She has a charming fresh colour.

L. Teas. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. Cand. Well, I'll swear 'tis natural, for I've seen it come and go.

L. Teas. Yes, it comes at night, and goes again in the morning.

Sir Benj. True, madam, it not only goes and comes, but what's more, her maid can fetch and carry it.

Mrs. Cand. Well—and what do you think of her sister?

Crab. What, Mrs. Evergreen—foregad, she's six and fifty if she is a day.

Mrs. Cand. Nay, I'll swear two or three and sixty is the outside. I dont think she looks more.

Sir Benj. Oh, there's no judging by her looks, unless we could see her face.

L. Sneer. Well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, she certainly effects it with great ingenuity, and surely that's better than

the careless manner in which the widow Oaker chalks her wrinkles.

Sir Benj. Nay, now, my Lady Sneerwell, you are too severe upon the widow. Come, it is not that she paints so ill, but when she has finished her face, she joins it so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once, that the head is modern, though the trunk is antique.

Crab. What do you think of Miss Simper?

Sir Benj. Why, she has pretty teeth.

L. Teas. Yes, and upon that account never shuts her mouth, but keeps it always ajar, as it were, thus (*shows her teeth*).

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Teas. And yet, I vow that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal the loss in front—she draws her mouth till it resembles the aperture of a poor box, and all her words appear to slide out edge-ways, as it were, thus—“*How do you do, madam!—Yes, madam.*”

L. Snurr. Ha, ha, ha! very well, Lady Teazle—I vow you appear to be a little severe.

L. Teas. In defence of a friend, you know, it is but just. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Ladies, your servant. Mercy upon me! the whole set—a character dead at every sentence.

[Aside.

Mrs. Cand. They wont allow good qualities to any one—not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Popsy.

Crab. What! the old fat dowager that was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night.

Mrs. Cand. Her bulk is her misfortune; and when she takes such pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

L. Sneer. That's very true, indeed.

L. Teas. Yes. I'm told she absolutely lives upon acids and small whey; laces herself with pullies; often in the hottest day of summer, you will see her on a little squat pony with her hair plaited and turned up like a drummer, and away she goes puffing round the ring in a full trot.

Sir Pet. Mercy on me! this is her own relation; a person they dine with twice a week. *[Aside.*

Mrs. Cand. I vow you shant be so severe upon the dowager; for let me tell you, great allowances are to be made for a woman who strives to pass for a flirt at six and thirty.

L. Sneer. Though surely she's handsome still; and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candle light, 'tis not to be wondered at.

Mrs. Cand. Very true; and for her manner, I think it very graceful, considering she never had any education; for her mother, you know, was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar baker at Bristol.

Sir Benj. Ah, you are both of you too good natured.

Mrs. Cand. Well, I never will join in the ridicule of a friend; so I tell my cousin Ogle, and you all know what pretensions she has to beauty.

Crab. She has the oddest countenance—a collection of features from all the corners of the globe.

Sir Benj. She has, indeed, an Irish front.

Crab. Caledonian locks.

Sir Benj. Dutch nose.

Crab. Austrian lips.

Sir Benj. The complexion of a Spaniard.

Crab. And teeth *a la Chinoise*.

Sir Benj. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa, where no two guests are of a nation.

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war, where every member seems to have a different interest, and the nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Sir Benj. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Sneer. Ha, ha! Well, I vow you are a couple of provoking toads.

Mrs. Cand. Well, I vow you shant carry the laugh, so let me tell you that Mrs. Ogle—

Sir Pet. Madam, madam, 'tis impossible to stop those good gentlemen's tongues; but when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are speaking of is a particular friend of mine, I hope you will be so good as not to undertake her defence.

L. Sneer. Well said, Sir Peter; but you are a cruel creature, too phlegmatic yourself for a wit, and too peevish to allow it to others.

Sir Pet. True wit, madam, is more nearly allied to good nature than you are aware of.

L. Teas. True, Sir Peter; I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

Sir Benj. Or rather, madam, suppose them to be man and wife, one so seldom sees them together.

L. Teas. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir Pet. Foregad, madam, if they considered the sporting with reputations of as much consequence as poaching on manors, and passed an act for the preservation of fame, they would find many would thank them for the bill.

L. Sneer. O lud! Sir Peter would deprive us of our privileges.

Sir Pet. Yes, madam; and none should then have

my dear Lady Teazle, when will you come and give me your opinion of my library?

Lady Teas. Why I really begin to think it not so proper; and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion dictates.

Jos. Oh, no more; a mere Platonic cicisbeo, that every lady is entitled to.

L. Teas. No further—and though Sir Peter's treatment may make me uneasy, it shall never provoke me——

Jos. To the only revenge in your power.

L. Teas. Go, you insinuating wretch—but we shall be missed, let us join the company.

Jos. I'll follow your ladyship.

L. Teas. Dont stay long, for I promise you Maria shant come to hear any more of your reasonings. [*Exit.*

Jos. A pretty situation I am in—by gaining the wife I shall lose the heiress. I at first intended to make her ladyship only the instrument in my designs on Maria, but—I dont know how it is—I am become her serious admirer. I begin now to wish I had not made a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has brought me into so many confounded rogueries, that I fear I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. SIR PETER TEAZLE'S House.

Enter SIR OLIVER and ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Ha, ha! and so my old friend is married at last, eh! Rowley—and to a young wife out of the country, ha, ha, ha! That he should buff to old bachelors so long, and sink into a husband at last.

Rowl. But let me beg of you, sir, not to rally him upon the subject, for he cannot bear it, though he has been married these seven months.

Sir Oliv. Then he has just been half a year on the stool of repentance. Poor Sir Peter! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, eh?

Rowl. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I believe is greatly aggravated by a suspicion of a connection between Charles and Lady Teazle, and such a report I know has been circulated and kept up, by means of Lady Sneerwell, and a scandalous party who associate at her house; where, I am convinced, if there is any partiality in the case, Joseph is the favourite.

Sir Oliv. Aye, aye, I know there is a set of mischievous prating gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and rob a young fellow of his good name, before he has sense enough to know the value of it: but I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by any such, I promise you. No, no, if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Rowl. I rejoice, sir, to hear you say so; and am happy to find the son of my old master has one friend left, however.

Sir Oliv. What! shall I forget, Mr. Rowley, when I was at his years myself; egad, neither my brother nor I were very prudent youths, and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

Rowl. 'Tis that reflection I build my hopes on—and my life on't! Charles will prove deserving of your kindness. But here comes Sir Peter.

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Where is he? Where is Sir Oliver? Ah, my dear friend, I rejoice to see you! You are welcome to England a thousand—and a thousand times!

Sir Oliv. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter—and I am glad to find you so well, believe me.

Sir Pet. Ah, Sir Oliver! It's sixteen years since last we saw one another; many a bout we have had together in our time!

Sir Oliv. Aye! I have had my share. But what, I find you are married—eh, old boy! Well, well, it cant be helped, and so I wish you joy with all my heart.

Sir Pet. Thank you, thank you—Yes, Sir Oliver, I have entered into that happy state—but we wont talk of that now.

Sir Oliv. That's true, Sir Peter, old friends should not begin upon grievances at their first meeting, no, no.

Rowl. [*Aside to Sir Oliver.*] Have a care, sir; dont touch upon that subject.

Sir Oliv. Well—so one of my nephews, I find, is a wild young rogue.

Sir Pet. Oh, my dear friend, I grieve at your disappointment there—Charles is, indeed, a sad libertine—but no matter, Joseph will make you ample amends, everybody speaks well of him.

Sir Oliv. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him—psha—then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools, as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir Pet. What the plague! are you angry with Joseph for not making enemies?

Sir Oliv. Why not, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

Sir Pet. Well, we'll see him, and you'll be convinced how worthy he is. He's a pattern for all the young men of the age. He's a man of the noblest sentiments.

Sir Oliv. Oh! plague of his sentiments—if he alludes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth,

shall be sick directly. But dont however mistake me, Sir Peter ; I dont mean to defend Charles's errors ; but before I form a judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts, and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for that purpose.

Sir Pet. My life on Joseph's honour.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink your lady's health, and tell you all our schemes.

Sir Pet. Allons, donc.

Sir Oliv. And dont, Sir Peter, be too severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life, I am not sorry he has run a little out of the course. For my part I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth ; 'tis like ivy round the sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. SIR PETER'S House.

Enter SIR PETER, SIR OLIVER, and ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. Well, well, we'll see this man first, and then have our wine afterwards. But, Rowley, I dont see the gist of your scheme.

Rowl. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley was a near relation of their mother's, and formerly an eminent merchant in Dublin ; he failed in trade, and is greatly reduced ; he has applied by letter to Mr. Surface and Charles for assistance, from the former of whom he has received nothing but fair promises ; while Charles, in the midst of his own distresses, is at present endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which I know he intends for the use of Mr. Stanley.

Sir Oliv. Aye, he's my brother's son.

Rowl. Now, sir, we propose that Sir Oliver shall visit them both, in the character of Mr. Stanley; as I have informed them he has obtained leave of his creditors to wait on his friends in person—and in the younger, believe me, you'll find one, who, in the midst of dissipation and extravagance, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it, *A heart for pity, and a hand open as day for melting charity.*

Sir Pet. What signifies his open hand and purse, if he has nothing to give? But where is this person you were speaking of?

Rowl. Below, sir, waiting your commands. You must know, Sir Oliver, this is a friendly Jew; one who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to assist Charles. Who waits? [*Enter a Servant.*] Desire Mr. Moses to walk up. [*Exit Servant.*]

Sir Pet. But are you sure he'll speak truth?

Rowl. Why, sir, I have persuaded him there's no prospect of his being paid several sums he has advanced for Charles, but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is in town; therefore you may depend on his being faithful to his interest. Oh, here comes the honest Israelite!

Enter MOSES.

Sir Oliver, this is Mr. Moses. Mr. Moses, this is Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

Mos. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir Oliv. That was unlucky, truly, for you had no opportunity of showing your talent.

Mos. None at all. I had not the pleasure of knowing

his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

Sir Oliv. Unfortunate indeed! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him?

Mos. Yes, he knows dat. This very evening I was to have brought a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will advance him some monies.

Sir Pet. What! a person that Charles has never borrowed money of before, lend him money in his present circumstances.

Mos. Yes——

Sir Oliv. What is the gentleman's name?

Mos. Mr. Premium, of Crutched-Friars, formerly a broker.

Sir Pet. Does he know Mr. Premium?

Mos. Not at all.

Sir Pet. A thought strikes me. Suppose, Sir Oliver, you were to visit him in that character, 't will be much better than the romantic one of an old relation; you will then have an opportunity of seeing Charles in all his glory.

Sir Oliv. Egad, I like that idea better than the other; and then I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Rowl. Gentlemen, this is taking Charles rather unawares; but Moses, you understand Sir Oliver; and I dare say you will be faithful.

Mos. You may depend upon me. This is very near the time I was to have gone.

Sir Oliv. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, *Moses.* But hold—I had forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Mos. There is no need—the principal is a Christian.

Sir Oliv. Is he? I am sorry for it. But then again.

am I not too smartly dressed to look like a money lender?

Sir Pet. Not at all—it would not be out of character if you went in your own chariot: would it, Moses?

Mos. Not in the least.

Sir Oliv. Well, but how must I talk? There's certainly some cant of usury, or mode of treating, that I ought to know.

Sir Pet. As I take it, Sir Oliver, the great point is to be exorbitant in your demands. Eh, Moses?

Mos. Yes, dat is very great point.

Sir Oliv. I'll answer for't, I'll not be wanting in that; eight or ten per cent. on the loan at least.

Mos. Oh! if you ask him no more as dat, you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir Oliv. Eh, what the plague—how much then?

Mos. Dat depends upon the circumstances—if he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty per cent., but if you find him in great distress, and he wants money very bad—you may ask double.

Sir Pet. Upon my word, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium I mean—it's a very pretty trade you're learning.

Sir Oliv. Truly I think so; and not unprofitable.

Mos. Then you know you have not the money yourself, but are forced to borrow it of a friend.

Sir Oliv. Oh, I borrow it for him of a friend, do I?

Mos. Yes, and your friend's an unconscionable dog, but you cant help dat.

Sir Oliv. Oh, my friend's an unconscionable dog. is he?

Mos. And then he himself has not the monies by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

Sir Oliv. He's forced to sell stock at a great loss; well, really, that's very kind of him.

Sir Pet. But hark 'ye, Moses, if Sir Oliver was to rail a little at the annuity bill, dont you think it would have a good effect?

Mos. Very much.

Rowl. And lament that a young man must now come to the years of discretion, before he has it in his power to ruin himself.

Mos. Aye! a great pity.

Sir Pet. Yes, and abuse the public for allowing merit to a bill, whose only object was to preserve youth and inexperience from the rapacious gripe of usury, and to give the young heir an opportunity of enjoying his fortune, without being ruined by coming into possession.

Sir Oliv. So, so—Moses shall give me further instructions as we go together.

Sir Pet. You'll scarce have time to learn your trade, for Charles lives but hard by.

Sir Oliv. Oh, never fear—my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I have turned the corner. [*Exeunt Sir Oliver and Moses.*]

Sir Pet. So, Rowley, you would have been partial, and given Charles notice of our plot.

Rowl. No, indeed, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Well, I see Maria coming, I want to have some talk with her. [*Exit Rowley.*]

Enter MARIA.

So, Maria—what, is Mr. Surface come home with you?

Mar. No, sir, he was engaged.

Sir Pet. Maria, I wish you were more sensible to his excellent qualities. Does not every time you are in his company convince you of the merit of that amiable young man?

Mar. You know, Sir Peter, I have often told you,

that of the men who have paid me a particular attention, there is not one I would not sooner prefer than Mr. Surface?

Sir Pet. Aye, aye, this blindness to his merit proceeds from your attachment to that profligate brother of his.

Mar. This is unkind; you know, at your request, I have forbore to see or correspond with him, as I have long been convinced he is unworthy my regard; but while my reason condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his misfortunes.

Sir Pet. Ah! you had best resolve to think of him no more, but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Mar. Never to his brother.

Sir Pet. Have a care, Maria; I have not yet made you know what the authority of a guardian is; dont force me to exert it.

Mar. I know that, for a short time, I am to obey you as my father, but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable.

[Exit in tears.]

Sir Pet. Sure never man was plagued as I am; I had not been married above three weeks, before her father, a hale, hearty man, died—on purpose to plague me with his daughter; but here comes my helpmate—she seems in mighty good humour; I wish I could tease her into loving me a little.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Teas. What's the matter, Sir Peter? What have you done to Maria? It is not fair to quarrel and I not by.

Sir Pet. Ah! Lady Teazle, it is in your power to put me into a good humour at any time.

L. Teas. Is it? I am glad of it—for I want you to be in a monstrous good humour now; come, do be good humoured, and let me have two hundred pounds.

Sir Pet. What the plague! cant I be in a good humour without paying for it; but look always thus, and you shall want for nothing. [*Pulls out a pocket-book.*] There there's two hundred pounds for you—[*Going to kiss*—now seal me a bond for the repayment.

L. Teas. No, my note of hand will do as well.

[*Giving her hand.*

Sir Pet. Well, well, I must be satisfied with that; but you shant much longer reproach me for not having made you a proper settlement—I intend shortly to surprise you.

L. Teas. Do you? You cant think, Sir Peter, how good humour becomes you; now you look just as you did before I married you.

Sir Pet. Do I indeed?

L. Teas. Dont you remember when you used to walk under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and asked me if I could like an old fellow, who could deny me nothing.

Sir Pet. Aye, and you were so attentive and obliging to me then.

L. Teas. Aye, to be sure I was, and used to take your part against all my acquaintance; and when my cousin Sophy used to laugh at me, for thinking of marrying a man old enough to be my father, and call you an ugly, stiff, formal bachelor, I contradicted her, and said I did not think you so ugly by any means, and that I dared say you would make a good sort of a husband.

Sir Pet. That was very kind of you. Well, and you were not mistaken, you have found it so, have not you? But shall we always live thus happy?

L. Teas. With all my heart; I'm—I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling—provided you will own you are tired first.

Sir Pet. With all my heart.

L. Teas. Then we shall be as happy as the day is long, and never, never—quarrel more.

Sir Pet. Never—never—never—and let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

L. Teas. Aye!—

Sir Pet. But, my dear Lady Teazle—my love—indeed you must keep a strict watch over your temper—for you know, my dear, that in all our disputes and quarrels, you always begin first.

L. Teas. No, no, Sir Peter, my dear, 't is always you that begins.

Sir Pet. No, no—no such thing.

L. Teas. Have a care, this is not the way to live happy, if you fly out thus.

Sir Pet. No, no—'t is you.

L. Teas. No—'t is you.

Sir Pet. Zounds! I say 't is you.

L. Teas. Lord! I never saw such a man in my life; just what my cousin Sophy told me.

Sir Pet. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, saucy, impertinent minx.

L. Teas. You are a very great bear, I am sure, to abuse my relations.

Sir Pet. But I am very well served for marrying you, a pert, forward, rural coquette, who had refused half the honest squires in the country.

L. Teas. I am sure I was a great fool for marrying you—a stiff, cross, dangling old bachelor, who was unmarried at fifty because nobody would have you.

Sir Pet. You were very glad to have me; you never had such an offer before.

L. Teaz. Oh, yes, I had! There was Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody said would be a better match; for his estate was full as good as yours, and—he has broke his neck since.

Sir Pet. Very—very well, madam. You're an ungrateful woman, and may plagues light on me if I ever try to be friends with you again. You shall have a separate maintenance.

L. Teaz. By all means a separate maintenance.

Sir Pet. Very well, madam—oh, very well! Aye, madam, and I believe the stories of you and Charles—of you and Charles, madam—were not without foundation.

L. Teaz. Take care, Sir Peter—take care what you say; for I wont be suspected without a cause, I promise you.

Sir Pet. A divorce——

L. Teaz. Aye, a divorce.

Sir Pet. Aye, zounds! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

L. Teaz. Well, Sir Peter, I see you are going to be in a passion, so I'll leave you; and when you come properly to your temper we shall be the happiest couple in the world, and never, never quarrel more. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*

Sir Pet. What the devil! Cant I make her angry either? I'll after her. Zounds! she must not presume to keep her temper. No, no; she may break my heart—but damn it—I'm determined she shant keep her temper,

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. CHARLES'S House.

Enter TRIP, SIR OLIVER, and MOSES.

Trip. This way, gentlemen, this way. Moses, what's the gentleman's name?

Sir Oliv. Mr. Moses, what's my name? [*Aside.*

Mos. Mr. Premium—

Trip. Oh, Mr. Premium—very well. [*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. To judge by the servant, one would not imagine the master was ruined. Sure this was my brother's house.

Mos. Yes, sir. Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with furniture, pictures, &c., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a great piece of extravagance in him.

Sir Oliv. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Gentlemen, my master is very sorry he has company at present, and cannot see you.

Sir Oliv. If he knew who it was that wanted to see him, perhaps he would not have sent such a message.

Trip. Oh, yes, I told who it was! I did not forget my little Premium, no, no.

Sir Oliv. Very well, sir; and pray what may your name be?

Trip. Trip, sir; Trip, at your service.

Sir Oliv. Very well, Mr. Trip. You have a pleasant sort of a place here, I guess.

Trip. Pretty well. There are four of us, who pass our time agreeably enough. Our wages indeed are but small, and sometimes a little in arrear. We have but fifty guineas a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir Oliv. Bags and bouquets! Halters and bastinadoes!

Trip. Oh, Moses, hark'ye, did you get that little bill discounted for me?

Sir Oliv. Wants to raise money too! Mercy on me! He has distresses, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. *[Aside.]*

Mos. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

[Gives the note.]

Trip. No! Why, I thought when my friend Brush had set his mark upon it, it was as good as cash.

Mos. No, indeed, it would not do.

Trip. Perhaps you could get it done by way of annuity.

Sir Oliv. An annuity! a footman raise money by annuity! Well said luxury, egad. *[Aside.]*

Mos. Well, but you must insure your place.

Trip. Oh, I'll insure my life, if you please.

Sir Oliv. That's more than I would your neck.

[Aside.]

Trip. Well, but I should like to have it done before this damned register takes place. One would not wish to have one's name made public.

Mos. No, certainly. But is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why, there's none of my master's clothes will fall very soon, I believe; but I can give a mortgage on some of his winter suits, with equity of redemption before Christmas—or a *post obit* on his blue and silver. Now these, with a few pair of point ruffles, by way of security—*[bell rings]* Coming, coming. Gentlemen, if you'll walk this way, perhaps I may introduce you now. Moses, don't forget the annuity—I'll insure my place, my little fellow.

Sir Oliv. If the man is the shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE III. CHARLES'S *House*.

CHARLES, CARELESS, SIR TOBY, and *Gentlemen*
discovered drinking.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Fore heaven you are in the right—the degeneracy of the age is astonishing. There are many of our acquaintance who are men of wit, genius, and spirit, but then they wont drink.

Care. True, Charles. They sink into the more substantial luxuries of the table, and quite neglect the bottle.

Char. Right. Besides, society suffers by it; for instead of the mirth and humour that used to mantle over a bottle of Burgundy, the conversation is as insipid as the Spa water they drink, which has all the tartness of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

Sir Toby. But what will you say to those who prefer play to the bottle? There's Harry, Dick, and Careless himself, who are under a hazard regimen.

Char. Psha! no such thing. What! would you train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn! Let me throw upon a bottle of Burgundy, and I never lose; at least, I never feel my loss, and that's the same thing.

First Gent. True; besides, 'tis wine determines if a man be really in love.

Char. So it is. Fill up a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the girl that has bewitched you.

Care. But come, Charles, you have not given us your real favourite.

Char. Faith, I have withheld her only in compassion to you; for if I give her you must toast a round of her peers, which is impossible [*sighs*] on earth.

Care. We'll toast some heathen deity, or celestial goddess, to match her.

Char. Why then bumpers—bumpers all round. Here's Maria—Maria [*sighs*].

First Gent. Maria—pscha, give us her surname.

Char. Pscha! Hang her surname; that's too formal to be registered in love's calendar.

First Gent. Maria then—Here's Maria.

Sir Toby. Maria—Come, here's Maria.

Char. Come, Sir Toby, have a care; you must give a beauty superlative.

Sir Toby. Then I'll give you—Here's—

Care. Nay, never hesitate. But Sir Toby has got a song that will excuse him.

Omnes. The song—the song.

Song.

Here's to the maiden of blushing fifteen,
Now to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting, extravagant quean,
And then to the housewife that's thrifty.
Let the toast pass, drink to the lass,
I warrant she'll find an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize,
Now to the damsel with none, sir;
Here's to the maid with a pair of blue eyes,
And now to the nymph with but one, sir.
Let the toast pass, &c.

Here's to the maid with her bosom of snow,
Now to her that's as brown as a berry;
Here's to the wife with her face full of woe,
And here's to the damsel that's merry.
Let the toast pass, &c.

For let them be clumsy, or let them be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill us a bumper quite up to the brim,
And e'en let us toast them together.
Let the toast pass, &c.

TRIP enters and whispers CHARLES.

Char. Gentlemen, I must beg your pardon [*rising*];
I must leave you upon business. Careless, take the chair.

Care. What, this is some wench, but we wont lose
you for her.

Char. No, upon my honour. It is only a Jew and
a broker come by appointment.

Care. A Jew and a broker! we'll have 'em in.

Char. Then desire Mr. Moses to walk in.

Trip. And little Premium too, sir.

Care. Aye, Moses and Premium. [*Exit Trip.*]
Charles, we'll give the rascals some generous Burgundy.

Char. No, hang it; wine but draws forth the
natural qualities of a man's heart, and to make them
drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter SIR OLIVER and MOSES.

Walk in, gentlemen, walk in; Trip, give chairs;
sit down, Mr. Premium, sit down, Moses; glasses,
Trip; come Moses, I'll give you a sentiment. "Here's
success to usury." Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Mos. "Here's success to usury."

Care. True, Charles, usury is industry, and deserves
to succeed.

Sir Oliv. Then here's "All the success it deserves."

Care. Oh, damme, sir, that wont do; you demur to
the toast, and shall drink it in a pint bumper, at least.

Mos. Oh, pray, sir, consider Mr. Premium is a
gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine, and I'll see justice done to the bottle. Fill, Moses, a quart.

Char. Pray consider, gentlemen, Mr. Premium is a stranger.

Sir Oliv. I wish I was out of their company.

[*Aside.*

Care. Come along, my boys; if they wont drink with us we'll not stay with them; the dice are in the next room. You'll settle your business, Charles, and come to us.

Char. Aye, aye; but, Careless, you must be ready—perhaps I may have occasion for you.

Care. Aye, aye—bill, bond, or annuity, 'tis all the same to me.

[*Exit with the rest.*

Mos. Mr. Premium is a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy, and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is—[*formally.*]

Char. Psha! hold your tongue. My friend, Moses, sir, is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression—I shall cut the matter very short. I'm an extravagant young fellow that wants to borrow money; and you, as I take it, are a prudent old fellow who has got money to lend. I am such a fool as to give forty per cent. rather than go without it; and you, I suppose, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. And now we understand one another, and may proceed to business without further ceremony.

Sir Oliv. Exceedingly frank, upon my word. I see you are not a man of compliments.

Char. No, sir.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure you some from a friend; but then he's a damned unconscionable dog; is he not, Moses?

Mos. But you cant help that.

Sir Oliv. And then, he has not the money by him, but must sell stock at a great loss. Must he not, Moses?

Mos. Yes, indeed. You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie.

Char. Aye, those who speak truth usually do. And, sir, I must pay the difference, I suppose. Why, look'ye, Mr. Premium, I know that money is not to be had without paying for it.

Sir Oliv. Well, but what security could you give? You have not any land, I suppose?

Char. Not a mole-hill, not a twig, but what grows in bow-pots out at the windows.

Sir Oliv. Nor any stock, I presume.

Char. None but live stock, and they're only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, sir, are you acquainted with any of my connexions?

Sir Oliv. To say the truth, I am.

Char. Then you must have heard that I have a rich old uncle in India, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations.

Sir Oliv. That you have a wealthy uncle I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Char. Oh, yes, I'm told I am a monstrous favourite; and that he intends leaving me everything.

Sir Oliv. Indeed! this is the first time I heard of it.

Char. Yes, yes, he intends making me his heir. Does he not, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes, I'll take my oath of that.

Sir Oliv. Egad, they'll persuade me presently that I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*]

Char. Now, what I propose, Mr. Premium, is to

give you a *post obit* on my uncle's life. Though, indeed, my uncle Noll has been very kind to me, and upon my soul, I shall be sincerely sorry to hear anything has happened to him.

Sir Oliv. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be the worst security you could offer me, for I might live to a hundred, and never recover the principal.

Char. Oh, yes, you would; for the moment he dies, you come upon me for the money.

Sir Oliv. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Char. What, you are afraid, my little Premium, that my uncle is too good a life.

Sir Oliv. No, indeed, I am not; though I have heard he's as hale, and as hearty, as any man of his years in Christendom.

Char. Oh, there you are misinformed. No, no, poor uncle Oliver! he breaks apace. The climate, sir, has hurt his constitution, and I'm told he's so much altered of late that his nearest relations dont know him.

Sir Oliv. No; ha, ha, ha! so much altered of late that his nearest relations would not know him. Ha, ha, ha! that's droll, egad.

Char. What, you are pleased to hear that he is on the decline, my little Premium.

Sir Oliv. No, I am not—no, no, no.

Char. Yes, you are, for it mends your chance.

Sir Oliv. But I am told Sir Oliver is coming over. Nay, some say he is actually arrived.

Char. Oh, there you are misinformed again. No, no such thing, he is this moment at Bengal. What! I must certainly know better than you.

Sir Oliv. Very true, as you say, you must know

better than I; though I have it from very good authority. Have I not, Moses?

Mos. Most undoubtedly.

Sir Oliv. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing that you would dispose of?

Char. How do you mean?

Sir Oliv. For instance, now; I have heard your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

Char. Yes, but that's gone long ago—Moses can inform you how, better than I can.

Sir Oliv. Good lack! all the family race cups, and corporation bowls gone. [*Aside.*] It was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and complete.

Char. Much too large and valuable for a private gentleman; for my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, and thought it a pity to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir Oliv. Mercy on me! knowledge that has run in the family like an heirloom. [*Aside.*] And pray, how may they have been disposed of?

Char. Oh! you must ask the auctioneer that—I don't believe even Moses can direct you there.

Mos. No—I never meddle with books.

Sir Oliv. The profligate! [*Aside.*] And is there nothing you can dispose of?

Char. Nothing—unless you have a taste for old family pictures. I have a whole room full of ancestors above stairs.

Sir Oliv. Why, sure you would not sell your relations?

Char. Every soul of them to the best bidder.

Sir Oliv. Not your great uncles and aunts?

Char. Aye, and my grandfathers and grandmothers.

Sir Oliv. I'll never forgive him this. [*Aside.*]
Why! what! Do you take me for Shylock in the play, to raise money from me on your own flesh and blood!

Char. Nay, dont be in a passion, my little Premium; what is it to you, if you have your money's worth?

Sir Oliv. That's very true, as you say. Well, well, I believe I can dispose of the family canvas. I'll never forgive him this. [*Asiae.*]

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what the devil are you doing so long with the broker? we are waiting for you.

Char. Oh! Careless, you are just come in time. we are to have a sale above stairs. I am going to sell all my ancestors to little Premium.

Care. Burn your ancestors.

Char. No, no, he may do that afterwards if he will. But, Careless, you shall be auctioneer.

Care. With all my heart—I can handle a hammer as well as a dice box—a-going—a-going.

Char. Bravo! And, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one.

Mos. Yes, I'll be the appraiser.

Sir Oliv. Oh, the profligate! [*Aside.*]

Char. But what's the matter, my little Premium? You dont seem to relish this business.

Sir Oliv. [*Affecting to laugh.*] Oh, yes, I do, really; ha, ha, ha, I—Oh, the prodigal! [*Aside.*]

Char. Very true; for when a man wants money, who the devil can he make free with, if he cant with his own relations. [*Exit,*]

Sir Oliv. [*Following.*] I'll never forgive him.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. CHARLES'S *House*.

Enter CHARLES, SIR OLIVER, CARELESS, and MOSES.

Char. Walk in, gentlemen, walk in; here they are—the family of the Surfaces up to the Conquest.

Sir Oliv. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Char. Aye, there they are, done in the true spirit and style of portrait painting, and not like your modern Raphaels, who will make your picture independent of yourself; no, the great merit of these is, the inveterate likeness they bear to the originals. All stiff and awkward as they were, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir Oliv. Oh, we shall never see such figures of men again!

Char. I hope not. You see, Mr. Premium, what a domestic man I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my ancestors. But come, let us proceed to business. To your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer. Oh, here's a great chair of my father's, that seems fit for nothing else.

Care. The very thing; but what shall I do for a hammer, Charles? An auctioneer is nothing without a hammer.

Char. A hammer! [*looking round.*] Let's see, what have we here—Sir Richard, heir to Robert—a genealogy in full, egad. Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir Oliv. What an unnatural rogue he is! An expert *de facto* parricide.

[*Aside.*

Care. Gad, Charles, this is lucky; it will not only serve for a hammer, but a catalogue too, if we should want it.

Char. True. Come, here's my great uncle Sir Richard Ravelin, a marvellous good general in his day. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. He is not dressed out in feathers like our modern captains, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What say you, Mr. Premium?

Mos. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Char. Why, you shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's cheap enough for a staff officer.

Sir Oliv. Heaven deliver me! his great uncle Sir Richard going for ten pounds. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, I take him at that price.

Char. Careless, knock down my uncle Sir Richard.

Care. Going, going—a-going—gone.

Char. This is a maiden sister of his, my great aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, thought to be one of his best pictures, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she sits, as a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten. I'm sure the sheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliv. Ah, poor aunt Deborah! a woman that set such a value on herself, going for five pounds ten. [*Aside*] Well, sir, she's mine.

Char. Knock down my aunt Deborah, Careless.

Care. Gone.

Char. Here are two cousins of theirs, Moses, these pictures were done when beaux wore periwigs, and ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. Yes, truly—head dresses seem to have been somewhat lower in those days.

Char. Here's a grandfather of my mother's, a judge

well known on the western circuit. What will you give for him?

Mos. Four guineas.

Char. Four guineas! why you dont bid the price of his wig. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let me knock him down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. By all means.

Care. Gone.

Char. Here are two brothers, William and Walter Blunt, Esqrs., both members of parliament, and great speakers; and what's very extraordinary, I believe this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliv. That's very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

Char. Well said, Premium.

Care. I'll knock them down at forty pounds. Going—going—gone.

Char. Here's a jolly, portly fellow; I dont know what relation he is to the family, but he was formerly mayor of Norwich; let's knock him down at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. No, I think six is enough for a mayor.

Char. Come, come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. They are mine.

Char. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen.

Care. Gone.

Char. But hang it, we shall be all day at this rate; come, come, give me three hundred pounds, and take all on this side the room in a lump. That will be the best way.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there's one portrait you have always passed over.

Care. What, that little ill-looking fellow over the settee.

Sir Oliv. Yes, sir, 'tis that I mean—but I dont think him so ill-looking a fellow by any means.

Char. That's the picture of my uncle Sir Oliver. Before he went abroad it was done, and is esteemed a very great likeness.

Care. That your Uncle Oliver! Then in my opinion you never will be friends, for he is one of the most stern-looking rogues I ever beheld; he has an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance. Dont you think so, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. Upon my soul I do not, sir; I think it as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But, I suppose, your uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber.

Char. No, hang it, the old gentleman has been very good to me, and I'll keep his picture as long as I have a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. The rogue's my nephew after all—I forgive him everything. (*Aside.*) But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Char. I am sorry for it, master broker, for you certainly wont have it. What the devil! have you not got enough of the family?

Sir Oliv. I forgive him everything. (*Aside*) Look'ye, sir, I am a strange sort of a fellow, and when I take a whim in my head, I dont value money; I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Char. Pry'thee dont be troublesome. I tell you I wont part with it, and there's an end on't.

Sir Oliv. 'How like his father the dog is? I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw so strong a resemblance. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, here's a draft for your sum. (*Giving a bill.*)

Char. Why, this bill is for eight hundred pounds.

Sir Oliv. You'll not let Sir Oliver go, then.

Char. No, I tell you once for all.

Sir Oliv. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that some other time. But give me your hand—*(presses it)*—you are a damned honest fellow, Charles—O lord! I beg pardon, sir, for being so free—Come along, Moses.

Char. But hark'ye, Premium, you'll provide good lodgings for these gentlemen. *(Going.)*

Sir Oliv. I'll send for 'em in a day or two.

Char. And pray let it be a genteel conveyance, for I assure you most of 'em have been used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliv. I will for all but Oliver.

Char. For all but the honest little nabob.

Sir Oliv. You are fixed on that.

Char. Peremptorily.

Sir Oliv. Ah, the dear extravagant dog! *(Aside.)* Good day, sir. Come, Moses. Now let me see who dares call him profligate? *[Exit with Moses.]*

Care. Why, Charles, this is the very prince of brokers.

Char. I wonder where Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow. But, Careless, step into the company; I'll wait on you presently, I see old Rowley coming.

Care. But hark'ye, Charles, dont let that fellow make you part with any of that money to discharge musty old debts. Tradesmen, you know, are the most impertinent people in the world.

Char. True, and paying them would be encouraging them.

Care. Well, settle your business, and make what haste you can, *[Exit.]*

Char. Eight hundred pounds! Two thirds of this are mine by right. Five hundred and thirty odd pounds! Gad, I never knew till now, that my ancestors were such valuable acquaintance. Kind ladies and gentlemen, I am your very much obliged, and most grateful humble servant. (*Bowing to the pictures.*)

Enter ROWLEY.

Ah! Rowley, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Rowl. Yes, sir; I heard they were going. But how can you support such spirits under all your misfortunes?

Char. That's the cause, Mr. Rowley; my misfortunes are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits.

Rowl. And can you really take leave of your ancestors with so much unconcern?

Char. Unconcern! What! I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at losing the company of so many worthy friends. It is very distressing to be sure; but, you see, they never move a muscle—then why the devil should I?

Rowl. Ah! dear Charles.

Char. But come, I have no time for trifling. Here, take this bill and get it changed, and carry a hundred pounds to poor Stanley, or we shall have somebody call that has a better right to it.

Rowl. Ah! sir, I wish you would remember the proverb—

Char. *Be just before you are generous.* Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old lame, hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity for the soul of me.

Rowl. Do, dear sir, reflect.

Char. That's very true, as you say. But, Rowley, —

while I have, by heavens I'll give; so damn your morality, and away to old Stanley with the money.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Parlour.*

Enter SIR OLIVER and MOSES.

Mos. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in all his glory. 'Tis a great pity he's so extravagant.

Sir Oliv. True; but he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And loves wine and women so much.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And games so deep.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture. Oh, here comes Rowley!

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Well, sir, I find you have made a purchase.

Sir Oliv. Yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

Rowl. And he has commissioned me to return you a hundred pounds of the purchase-money, but under your fictitious character of old Stanley. I saw a tailor and two hosiers dancing attendance, who, I know, will go unpaid, and the hundred pounds would satisfy them.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, I'll pay his debts and his benevolence too. But now I'm no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Gentlemen, I'm sorry I was not in the way to show you out. Hark'ye, Moses. [*Exit with Moses.*]

Sir Oliv. There's a fellow now. Will you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master.

Rowl. Indeed!

Sir Oliv. And they are now planning an annuity business. Oh, Master Rowley, in my time servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were wore a little threadbare; but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Apartments of* JOSEPH SURFACE.

Enter JOSEPH and a SERVANT.

Jos. No letters from Lady Teazle?

Serv. No, sir.

Jos. I wonder she did not write if she could not come. I hope Sir Peter does not suspect. But Charles's dissipation and extravagance are great points in my favour. [*Knocking at the door.*] See if it is her.

Serv. 'Tis Lady Teazle, sir; but she always orders her chair to the milliner's in the next street.

Jos. Then draw that screen—my opposite neighbour is a maiden lady of so curious a temper. You need not wait. [*Exit Servant.*] My Lady Teazle, I'm afraid, begins to suspect my attachment to Maria; but she must not be acquainted with that secret till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Teaz. What! sentiment in soliloquy! Have you been very impatient now? Nay, you look so grave. I assure you I came as soon as I could.

Jos. Oh, madam, punctuality is a species of constancy—a very unfashionable custom among ladies.

L. Teaz. Nay, you wrong me; I'm sure you'd pity me if you knew my situation. [*Both sit.*] Sir Peter really grows so peevish and so ill-natured, there's no enduring him; and then to suspect me with Charles—

Yos. I'm glad my scandalous friends keep up that report. [*Aside.*]

L. Teaz. For my part, I wish Sir Peter to let Maria marry him—wouldn't you, Mr. Surface?

Yos. Indeed I would not. [*Aside.*] Oh, to be sure; and then my dear Lady Teazle would be convinced how groundless her suspicions were of my having any thoughts of the silly girl!

L. Teaz. Then there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has propagated malicious stories about me; and what's very provoking, all without the least foundation.

Yos. Ah! there's the mischief; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there's no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

L. Teaz. And to be continually censured and suspected, when I know the integrity of my own heart—it would almost prompt me to give him some grounds for it.

Yos. Certainly; for when a husband grows suspicious, and withdraws his confidence from his wife, it then becomes a part of her duty to endeavour to outwit him. You owe it to the natural privilege of your sex.

L. Teaz. Indeed!

Yos. Oh, yes; for your husband should never be deceived in you, and you ought to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

L. Teaz. This is the newest doctrine.

Yos. Very wholesome, believe me.

L. Teaz. So the only way to prevent his suspicions is to give him cause for them. But the consciousness of my innocence—

Yos. Ah! my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis that consciousness of your innocence that ruins you. What is it that makes you imprudent in your conduct and careless of ~~the~~ censures of the world? The consciousness of your

innocence. What is it that makes you regardless of forms and inattentive to your husband's peace? Why, the consciousness of your innocence. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you could only be prevailed upon to make a trifling *faux-pas*, you can't imagine how circumspect you would grow.

L. Teaz. Do you think so?

Jos. Depend upon it. Your case at present, my dear Lady Teazle, resembles that of a person in a plethora—you are absolutely dying of too much health.

L. Teaz. Why, indeed, if my understanding could be convinced—

Jos. Your understanding? Oh, yes, your understanding *should* be convinced! Heaven forbid that I should persuade you to anything that you thought wrong! No, no; I have too much honour for that.

L. Teaz. Don't you think you may as well leave honour out of the question? *[Both rise.]*

Jos. Ah! I see, Lady Teazle, the effects of your country education still remain.

L. Teaz. They do indeed, and I begin to find myself imprudent; and if I should be brought to act wrong, it would be sooner from Sir Peter's ill-treatment of me than from your honourable logic, I assure you.

Jos. Then by this hand, which is unworthy of *[Kneeling: a Servant enters]*—What do you want, you scoundrel?

Ser. I beg pardon, sir. I thought you would not choose Sir Peter should come up.

Jos. Sir Peter!

L. Teaz. Sir Peter! Oh, I'm undone! What shall I do? Hide me somewhere, good Mr. Logic.

Jos. Here, here, behind this screen *[She runs behind the screen]*, and now reach me a book.

[Sits down and reads.]

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Aye, there he is, ever improving himself.
Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface.

Jos. [*Affecting to gape.*] Oh, Sir Peter! I rejoice to see you—I was got over a sleepy book here—I am vastly glad to see you—I thank you for the call—I believe you have not been here since I finished my library. Books, books, you know, are the only thing I am a coxcomb in.

Sir Pet. Very pretty, indeed—why, even your screen is a source of knowledge—hung round with maps I see.

Jos. Yes, I find great use in that screen.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, so you must when you want to find anything in a hurry.

Jos. Yes, or to hide anything in a hurry. [*Aside.*]

Sir Pet. But, my dear friend, I want to have some private talk with you.

Jos. You need not wait. [*Exit Servant.*]

Sir Pet. Pray sit down. [*Both sit.*] My dear friend, I want to impart to you some of my distresses. In short, Lady Teazle's behaviour of late has given me very great uneasiness. She not only dissipates and destroys my fortune, but I have strong reasons to believe she has formed an attachment elsewhere.

Jos. I am unhappy to hear it.

Sir Pet. I knew you would sympathise with me.

Jos. Believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would affect me just as much as it does you.

Sir Pet. What a happiness to have a friend we can trust, even with our family secrets! Can you guess who it is?

Jos. I haven't the most distant idea. It cant be Sir Benjamin Backbite?

Sir Pet. No, no. What do you think of Charles?

Jos. My brother! impossible! I cant think he would be capable of such baseness and ingratitude.

Sir Pet. Ah, the goodness of your own mind makes you slow to believe such villainy.

Jos. Very true, Sir Peter. The man who is conscious of the integrity of his own heart, is ever slow to credit another's baseness.

Sir Pet. And yet, that the son of my old friend should practise against the honour of my family.

Jos. Aye, there's the case, Sir Peter. When ingratitude beards the dart of injury, the wound feels doubly smart.

Sir Pet. What noble sentiments! He never used a sentiment; ungrateful boy! that I have acted as guardian to, and who was brought up under my eye; and I never in my life refused him—my advice.

Jos. I dont know, Sir Peter—he may be such a man—if it be so, he is no longer a brother of mine; I renounce him. For the man who can break through the laws of hospitality, and seduce the wife or daughter of his friend, deserves to be branded as a pest to society.

Sir Pet. And yet, Joseph, if I was to make it public, I should only be sneered and laughed at.

Jos. Why, that is very true. No, no, you must not make it public; people would talk—

Sir Pet. Talk!—they'd say it was all my own fault; an old doting bachelor to marry a young giddy girl. They'd paragraph me in the newspapers, and make ballads on me.

Jos. And yet, Sir Peter, I cant think that my Lady Teazle's honour—

Sir Pet. Ah, my dear friend, what's her honour opposed against the flattery of a handsome young fellow? But, Joseph, she has been upbraiding me of

late, that I have not made her a settlement; and I think, in our last-quarrel, she told me she would not be sorry if I was dead. Now, I have brought draughts of two deeds for your perusal, and she shall find, if I was to die, that I have not been inattentive to her welfare while living. By the one she will enjoy eight hundred pounds a year during my life; and by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Jos. This conduct is truly generous. I wish it mayn't corrupt my pupil. *[Aside.]*

Sir Pet. But I would not have her as yet acquainted with the least mark of my affection.

Jos. Nor I—if I could help it. *[Aside.]*

Sir Pet. And now I have unburthened myself to you, let us talk over your affair with Maria.

Jos. Not a syllable upon the subject now. *[Alarmed.]* Some other time. I am too much affected by your affairs to think of my own; for the man who can think of his own happiness while his friend is in distress deserves to be hunted as a monster out of society.

Sir Pet. I am sure of your affection for her.

Jos. Let me entreat you, Sir Peter——

Sir Pet. And though you are so averse to Lady Teazle's knowing it, I assure you she is not your enemy, and I am sensibly chagrined you have made no further progress.

Jos. Sir Peter, I must not hear you. The man who *[Enter a Servant]*——What do you want, sirrah?

Ser. Your brother, sir, is at the door talking to a gentleman. He says he knows you are at home, that Sir Peter is with you, and he must see you.

Jos. I am not at home.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, you shall be at home.

Jos. *[After some hesitation.]* Very well; let him

come up.

Sir Pet. Now, Joseph, I'll hide myself; and do you tax him about the affair with my Lady Teazle, and so draw the secret from him.

Jos. Oh, fie, Sir Peter! What! join in a plot to trepan my brother?

Sir Pet. Oh, aye, to serve your friend! Besides, if he is innocent, as you say he is, it will give him an opportunity to clear himself and make me very happy. Hark! I hear him coming. Where shall I go? behind this screen? What the devil! Here has been one listener already; for I'll swear I saw a petticoat.

Jos. [*Affecting a laugh.*] It's very ridiculous—ha, ha, ha!—a ridiculous affair indeed—ha, ha, ha! Hark'ye, Sir Peter [*pulling him aside*], though I hold a man of intrigue to be the most despicable character, yet you know it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either. Hark'ye, 'tis a little French milliner that calls upon me sometimes, and hearing you were coming, and having some character to lose, she slipped behind the screen.

Sir Pet. A French milliner! [*Smiling.*] Cunning rogue, Joseph—sly rogue! But zounds! she has overheard everything that has passed about my wife!

Jos. Oh, never fear! Take my word, it will never go farther for her.

Sir Pet. Wont it?

Jos. No, depend upon it.

Sir Pet. Well, well, if it will go no further. But where shall I hide myself?

Jos. Here, here; slip into the closet, and you may overhear every word.

L. Teaz. Can I steal away? [*Peeping.*]

Jos. Hush! hush! Dont stir.

Sir Pet. Joseph, tax him home. [*Peeping.*]

Jos. In, in, my dear Sir Peter.

L. Teaz. Cant you lock the closet door?

Jos. Not a word; you'll be discovered.

Sir Pet. Joseph, dont spare him.

Jos. For heaven's sake lie close! A pretty situation I am in, to part man and wife in this manner. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. You're sure the little French milliner wont blab?

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Why, how now, brother? Your fellow denied you; he said you were not at home. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Jos. Neither, brother, neither.

Char. But where's Sir Peter? I thought he was with you.

Jos. He was, brother; but hearing you were coming, he left the house.

Char. What! was the old fellow afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Jos. Borrow! no, brother. But I am sorry to hear you have given that worthy man cause for great uneasiness.

Char. Yes, I am told I do that to a great many worthy men. But how do you mean, brother?

Jos. Why, he thinks you have endeavoured to alienate the affections of Lady Teazle.

Char. Who? I alienate the affections of Lady Teazle! Upon my word he accuses me very unjustly. What! has the old gentleman found out that he has got a young wife? or, what is worse, has the lady found out that she has got an old husband?

Jos. For shame, brother.

Char. 'Tis true, I did once suspect her ladyship had a partiality for me, but upon my soul I never gave her the least encouragement; for, you know, my attachment was to Maria.

Jos. This will make Sir Peter extremely happy.

But if she had a partiality for you, sure you would not have been base enough——

Char. Why, look'ye, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman should purposely throw herself in my way, and that pretty woman should happen to be married to a man old enough to be her father——

Jos. What then?

Char. Why then, I believe I should—have occasion to borrow a little of your morality, brother.

Jos. Oh, fie, brother! The man who can jest——

Char. Oh, that's very true, as you were going to observe! But, Joseph, do you know that I am surprised at your suspecting me with Lady Teazle. I thought you were always the favourite there.

Jos. Me!

Char. Why, yes; I have seen you exchange such significant glances.

Jos. Psha!

Char. Yes, I have; and dont you remember when I came in here and caught her and you at——

Jos. I must stop him. [*Aside.*] [*Stops his mouth.*] Sir Peter has overheard every word that you have said.

Char. Sir Peter! where is he? What! in the closet? Foregad I'll have him out.

Jos. No, no! [*Stopping him.*]

Char. 'I will. Sir Peter Teazle, come into court.

Enter SIR PETER.

What! my old guardian turn inquisitor, and take evidence *incog*!

Sir Pet. Give me your hand. I own, my dear boy, I have suspected you wrongfully; but you must not be angry with Joseph. It was my plot, and I shall think of you as long as I live for what I overheard.

Char. Then 'tis well you did not hear more, is it not, Joseph?

Sir Pet. What! you would have retorted on Joseph, would you?

Char. And yet you might have as well suspected him as me, might he not, Joseph?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. [*Whispering Joseph.*] Lady Sneerwell, sir, is just coming up, and says she must see you.

Yos. Gentlemen, I must beg your pardon; I have company waiting for me. Give me leave to conduct you downstairs.

Char. No, no; speak to them in another room. I have not seen Sir Peter a great while, and I want to talk with him.

Yos. Well, I'll send away the person and return immediately. Sir Peter, not a word of the little French milliner. [*Aside and exit.*]

Sir Pet. Ah! Charles, what a pity you dont associate more with your brother. We then might have some hopes of your reformation; he's a young man of such sentiments. Ah! there is nothing in this world so noble as a man of sentiment.

Char. Oh, he's too moral by half, and so apprehensive of his good name, that I dare say he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench!

Sir Pet. No, no, you accuse him wrongfully. Though Joseph is no rake, he is no saint.

Char. Oh! a perfect anchorite—a young hermit.

Sir Pet. Hush, hush; dont abuse him, or he may chance to hear of it again.

Char. Why, you wont tell him, will you?

Sir Pet. No, no, but I have a great mind to tell

him. [*Aside*—[*seems to hesitate.*] Hark'ye, Charles, have you a mind for a laugh at Joseph?

Char. I should like it of all things—let's have it.

Sir Pet. Gad, I'll tell him—I'll be even with Joseph for discovering me in the closet. [*Aside*] Hark'ye, Charles, he had a girl with him when I called.

Char. Who, Joseph? impossible!

Sir Pet. Yes, a little French milliner [*Takes him to the front*], and the best of the joke is, she is now in the room.

Char. The devil she is. Where?

Sir Pet. Hush, hush—behind the screen.

Char. I'll have her out.

Sir Pet. No, no, no.

Char. Yes.

Sir Pet. No.

Char. By the Lord I will. So now for it.

[*Both run up to the screen. The screen falls, at the same time Joseph enters.*]

Char. Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful!

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, by all that's horrible!

Char. Sir Peter, this is the smartest little French milliner I ever saw. But pray, what is the meaning of all this? You seem to have been playing at hide and seek here, and for my part I don't know who's in or who's out of the secret. Madam, will you please to explain; not a word—I—brother, is it your pleasure to illustrate? Morality dumb, too! Well, though I can make nothing of it, I suppose you perfectly understand one another, good folks, and so I leave you. Brother, I am sorry you have given that worthy man so much cause for uneasiness. Sir Peter, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Yos. Sir Peter, notwithstanding appearances are

against me—if—if you'll give me leave—I'll explain everything to your satisfaction.

Sir Pet. If you please, sir.

Yos. Lady Teazle knowing my—Lady Teazle—I say—knowing my pretensions—to your ward—Maria—and Lady Teazle—I say—knowing the jealousy of my—of your temper—she called in here—in order that she—that I—might explain what these pretensions were. And—hearing you were coming—and—as I said before—knowing the jealousy of your temper—she—my Lady Teazle—I say—went behind the screen—and—This is a full and clear account of the whole affair.

Sir Pet. A very clear account, truly! and I dare say the lady will vouch for the truth of every word of it.

L. Teas. [*Advancing.*] For not one syllable, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. What the devil! dont you think it worth your while to agree in the lie?

L. Teas. There's not a word of truth in what that gentleman has been saying.

Yos. Zounds, madam, you wont ruin me.

L. Teas. Stand out of the way, Mr. Hypocrite, I'll speak for myself.

Sir Pet. Aye, aye—let her alone—she'll make a better story than you did.

L. Teas. I came here with no intention of listening to his addresses to Maria, and even ignorant of his pretensions; but seduced by his insidious arts, at least to listen to his addresses, if not to sacrifice your honour, to his baseness.

Sir Pet. Now I believe the truth is coming indeed.

Yos. What, is the woman mad?

L. Teas. No, sir, she has recovered her senses. Sir Peter, I cannot expect you'll credit me; but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am certain you did

not know I was within hearing, has penetrated so deep into my heart, that could I have escaped the mortification of this discovery, my future life should have convinced you of my sincere repentance. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he pretended an honourable passion for his ward, I now view him in so despicable a light, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to his addresses. [*Exit.*]

Yos. Sir Peter—notwithstanding all this—heaven is my witness——

Sir Pet. That you are a villain, and so I'll leave you to your meditations.

Yos. Nay, Sir Peter, you must not leave me. The man who shuts his ears against conviction——

Sir Pet. Oh, damn your sentiments—damn your sentiments. [*Exit, Joseph following.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. JOSEPH SURFACE'S Apartments.

Enter JOSEPH and a SERVANT.

Yos. Mr. Stanley! why should you think I would see Mr. Stanley! you know well enough he comes entreating for something.

Serv. They let him in before I knew of it; and old Rowley is with him.

Yos. Psha, you blockhead; I am so distracted with my own misfortunes, I am not in a humour to speak with any one—but shew the fellow up. [*Exit Servant.*] Sure fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before. My character ruined with Sir Peter—my hopes of Maria lost—I'm in a pretty humour to listen to poor relations, truly. I shant be

able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on old Stanley. Oh, here he comes; I'll retire, and endeavour to put a little charity in my face, however. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR OLIVER *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. What, does he avoid us? That was him, was it not?

Rowl. Yes, sir; but his nerves are too weak to bear the sight of a poor relation; I should have come first to break the matter to him.

Sir Oliv. A plague of his nerves! yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking.

Rowl. Yes, he has as much speculative benevolence as any man in the kingdom, though he is not so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir Oliv. Yet he has a string of sentiments, I suppose, at his finger ends.

Rowl. And his favourite one is, *That charity begins at home.*

Sir Oliv. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort, which never stirs abroad at all.

Rowl. Well, sir, I'll leave you to introduce yourself as old Stanley; I must be here again to announce you in your real character.

Sir Oliv. True; and you'll afterwards meet me at Sir Peter's.

Rowl. Without losing a moment. [*Exit Rowley.*]

Sir Oliv. Here he comes—I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Enter JOSEPH.

Jos. Sir, your most obedient; I beg pardon for keeping you a moment—Mr. Stanley, I presume.

Sir Oliv. At your service, sir.

Jos. Pray, be seated, Mr. Stanley, I entreat you, sir.

Sir Oliv. Dear sir, there's no occasion. Too ceremonious by half. [*Aside.*

Jos. Though I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, I am very glad to see you look so well. I think, Mr. Stanley, you were nearly related to my mother.

Sir Oliv. I was, sir; so nearly, that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children; else I would not presume to trouble you now.

Jos. Ah, sir, dont mention that. For the man who is in distress has ever a right to claim kindred with the wealthy; I am sure I wish I were of that number, or that it were in my power even to afford you a small relief.

Sir Oliv. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

Jos. I wish he were, sir; you should not want an advocate with him, believe me.

Sir Oliv. I should not need one, my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty had enabled you to be the agent of his charities.

Jos. Ah, sir, you are mistaken; avarice, avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age; to be sure it has been spread abroad that he has been very bountiful to me, but without the least foundation, though I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir Oliv. And has he never remitted you bullion, rupees, or pagodas?

Jos. Oh, dear sir, no such thing. I have indeed received some trifling presents from him, such as shawls, avadavats, and Indian crackers; nothing more, sir.

Sir Oliv. There's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds! [*Aside.*] Shawls, avadavats, and Indian crackers!

Yos. Then, there's my brother, Mr. Stanley; one would scarce believe what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. Not I, for one. *[Aside.*

Yos. The sums I have lent him! Well, 'twas an amiable weakness—I must own I cant defend it, though it appears more blamable at present, as it prevents me from serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart directs.

Sir Oliv. Dissembler. *[Aside.]* Then you cannot assist me.

Yos. I am very unhappy to say it's not in my power at present; but you may depend upon hearing from me when I can be of any service to you.

Sir Oliv. Sweet sir, you are too good.

Yos. Not at all, sir; to pity without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and to be denied. Indeed, Mr. Stanley, you have deeply affected me. Sir, your most devoted; I wish you health and spirits.

Sir Oliv. You ever grateful and perpetual *[bowing low]* humble servant.

Yos. I am extremely sorry, sir, for your misfortunes. Here, open the door. Mr. Stanley, your most devoted.

Sir Oliv. Your most obliged servant. Charles, you are my heir. *[Aside, and exit.*

Yos. This is another of the evils that attends a man having so good a character. It subjects him to the importunity of the necessitous—the pure and sterling ore of charity is a very expensive article in the catalogue of a man's virtues; whereas the sentimental French plate I use answers the purpose full as well, and pays no tax. *[Going.*

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Mr. Surface, your most obedient; I wait upon you from your uncle, who is just arrived.

[Gives him a note.

Jos. How! Sir Oliver arrived! Here, Mr. —, call back Mr. Stanley.

Rowl. It's too late, sir, I met him going out of the house.

Jos. Was ever anything so unfortunate! [*Aside.*] I hope my uncle has enjoyed good health and spirits.

Rowl. Oh, very good, sir; he bid me inform you he'll wait on you within this half hour.

Jos. Present him my kind love and duty, and assure him I'm quite impatient to see him. [*Bowing.*]

Rowl. I shall, sir. [*Exit Rowley.*]

Jos. Pray do, sir. [*Bows.*] This was the most cursed piece of ill luck. [*Exit Joseph.*]

SCENE II. SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter MRS. CANDOUR and MAID.

Maid. Indeed, madam, my lady will see no one at present.

Mrs. Cand. Did you tell her it was her friend, Mrs. Candour?

Maid. I did, madam, and she begs to be excused.

Mrs. Cand. Go again, for I am sure she must be greatly distressed. [*Exit Maid.*] How provoking to be kept waiting!—I am not mistress of half the circumstances:—I shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the parties' names at full length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Mrs. Cand. Oh, Sir Benjamin, I am glad you are come; have you heard of Lady Teazle's affair? Well, I never was so surprised, and I am so distressed for the parties.

Sir Benj. Nay, I cant say I pity Sir Peter, he was always so partial to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. Cand. Mr. Surface! Why it was Charles.

Sir Benj. Oh, no, madam, Mr. Surface was the gallant.

Mrs. Cand. No, Charles was the lover; and Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was the cause of the discovery; he brought Sir Peter, and——

Sir Benj. Oh, my dear madam, no such thing; for I had it from one——

Mrs. Cand. Yes, and I had it from one, that had it from one that knew——

Sir Benj. And I had it from one——

Mrs. Cand. No such thing; but here comes my Lady Sneerwell, and perhaps she may have heard the particulars.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

L. Sneer. Oh, dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair about our friend Lady Teazle.

Mrs. Cand. Why, to be sure, poor thing, I am much concerned for her.

L. Sneer. I protest so am I—though I must confess she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. Cand. But she had a great deal of good nature.

Sir Benj. And had a very ready wit.

Mrs. Cand. But do you know all the particulars?

[To Lady Sneerwell]

Sir Benj. Yet who could have suspected Mr. Surface!

Mrs. Cand. Charles you mean.

Sir Benj. No, Mr. Surface.

Mrs. Cand. Oh, 't was Charles.

L. Sneer. Charles!

Mrs. Cand. Yes, Charles.

Sir Benj. I'll not pretend to dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but be it as it may, I hope Sir Peter's wounds wont prove mortal.

Mrs. Cand. Sir Peter's wounds! what! did they fight? I never heard a word of that.

Sir Benj. No!—

Mrs. Cand. No!—

L. Sneer. Nor I, a syllable. Do, dear Sir Benjamin, tell us.

Sir Benj. Oh, my dear madam, then you dont know half the affair. Why—why—I'll tell you:—Sir Peter, you must know, had a long time suspected Lady Teazle's visits to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. Cand. To Charles you mean.

Sir Benj. No, Mr. Surface;—and upon going to his house, and finding Lady Teazle there—Sir, says Sir Peter, you are a very ungrateful fellow.

Mrs. Cand. Aye, that was Charles.

Sir Benj. Mr. Surface. And old as I am, says he, I demand immediate satisfaction. Upon this, they both drew their swords, and to it they fell.

Mrs. Cand. That must be Charles; for it is very unlikely that Mr. Surface should fight him in his own house.

Sir Benj. Sdeath, madam, not at all. Lady Teazle, upon seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and was followed by Charles, calling out for hartshorn and water. They fought, and Sir Peter received a wound in his right side by the thrust of a small sword.

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. Pistols! pistols! nephew.

Mrs. Cand. Oh, Mr. Crabtree, I am glad you are come; now we shall have the whole affair.

Sir Benj. No, no, it was a small sword, uncle.

Crab. Zounds! nephew, I say it was a pistol.

Sir Benj. A thrust in second, through the small guts.

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax.

Sir Benj. But give me leave, dear uncle, it was a small sword.

Crab. I tell you it was a pistol. Wont you suffer anybody to know anything but yourself? It was a pistol, and Charles——

Mrs. Cand. Aye, I knew it was Charles.

Sir Benj. Mr. Surface, uncle.

Crab. Why, zounds! I say it was Charles. Must nobody speak but yourself? I'll tell you how the whole affair was.

L. Smeer. } Aye, do ; pray tell us.

Mrs. Cand. }

Crab. Mr. Surface, you must know, ladies, came late from Salthill, where he had been the night before with a particular friend of his, who has a son at Eton. His pistols were left on the bureau, and unfortunately loaded ; and on Sir Peter's taxing Charles——

Sir Benj. Mr. Surface you mean.

Crab. Do, pray, nephew, hold your tongue, and let me speak sometimes. I say, ladies, upon his taking Charles to account, and taxing him with the basest ingratitude——

Sir Benj. Aye, ladies, I told you Sir Peter taxed him with ingratitude.

Crab. They agreed each to take a pistol. They fired at the same instant. Charles's ball took place, and lodged in the thorax. Sir Peter's missed, and, what is very extraordinary, the ball grazed against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the chimney, flew off through the window at right angles and

wounded the postman, who was just come to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir Benj. I heard nothing of all this. I must own, ladies, my uncle's account is more circumstantial, though I believe mine is the true one.

L. Sneer. I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information.

[Aside, and exit.]

Sir Benj. Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Why, yes; they do say—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. Cand. But, pray, where is Sir Peter now? I hope his wound wont prove mortal.

Crab. He was carried home immediately, and has given positive orders to be denied to everybody.

Sir Benj. And I believe Lady Teazle is attending him.

Mrs. Cand. I believe so too.

Crab. Certainly. I met one of the faculty as I came in.

Sir Benj. Gad so! and here he comes.

Crab. Yes, yes, that's the doctor.

Mrs. Cand. That certainly must be the physician. Now we shall get information.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Dear doctor, how is your patient?

Sir Benj. I hope his wound is not mortal?

Crab. Is he in a fair way of recovery?

Sir Benj. Pray, doctor, was he not wounded by a thrust of a sword through the small guts?

Crab. Was it not by a bullet that lodged in the thorax?

Sir Benj. Nay, pray answer me.

Crab. Dear, dear doctor, speak. [*All pulling him.*]

Sir Oliv. Eh! Eh! good people, are you all mad? Why, what the devil is the matter?—a sword through the small guts, and a bullet lodged in the thorax? What would you all be at?

Sir Benj. Then perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor.

Sir Oliv. If I am, sir, I am to thank you for my degree.

Crab. Only a particular friend, I suppose.

Sir Oliv. Nothing more, sir.

Sir Benj. Then I suppose, as you are a friend, you can be better able to give us some account of his wounds.

Sir Oliv. Wounds!

Mrs. Cand. What! haven't you heard he was wounded—the saddest accident!

Sir Benj. A thrust with a sword through the small guts.

Crab. A bullet in the thorax.

Sir Oliv. Good people, speak one at a time, I beseech you. You both agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Crab. } Ay, ay, we both agree in that.

Sir Benj. }

Sir Oliv. Then I will be bold to say Sir Peter is one of the most imprudent men in the world; for here he comes, walking as if nothing had happened.

Enter SIR PETER.

My good friend, you are certainly mad to walk about in this condition. You should go to bed, you that have had a sword through your small guts and a bullet lodged in your thorax.

Sir Pet. A sword through my small guts and a bullet lodged in my thorax!

Sir Oliv. Yes, these worthy people would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, in order to make me an accomplice.

Sir Pet. What is all this?

Sir Benj. Sir Peter, we are very glad to find the story of the duel is not true.

Crab. And exceedingly sorry for your other misfortunes.

Sir Pet. So, so—all over the town already. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Cand. Though, as Sir Peter was so good a husband, I pity him sincerely.

Sir Pet. Plague of your pity!

Crab. As you continued so long a bachelor, you were certainly to blame to marry at all.

Sir Pet. Sir, I desire you'll consider this is my own house.

Sir Benj. However, you must not be offended at the jests you'll meet on this occasion.

Crab. It is no uncommon case, that's one thing.

Sir Pet. I insist upon being master here; in plain terms, I desire you'll leave my house immediately.

Mrs. Cand. Well, well, sir, we are going; and, you may depend upon it, we shall make the best of the story. [*Exit.*

Sir Benj. And tell how badly you have been treated.

Sir Pet. Leave my house directly. [*Exit Sir Benj.*

Crab. And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit Crab.*

Sir Pet. Leave my house, I say. Fiends, furies, there is no bearing of it!

Enter ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Well, Sir Peter, I have seen my nephews.

Rowl. And Sir Oliver is convinced your judgment is right after all.

Sir Oliv. Aye, Joseph' is the man.

Rowl. Such sentiments!

Sir Oliv. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Rowl. Oh, 'tis edification to hear him talk!

Sir Oliv. He is a pattern to the young men of the age. But how comes it, Sir Peter, that you dont join in his praises?

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Sir Oliv. Right, right, my old friend. But were you always so moderate in your judgment?

Rowl. Do you say so, Sir Péter, you who were never mistaken in your life?

Sir Pet. Oh, the plague of your jokes! I suppose you are acquainted with the whole affair.

Rowl. I am indeed, sir. I met Lady Teazle returning from Mr. Surface's so humbled, that she deigned to beg even me to become her advocate.

Sir Pet. What! does Sir Oliver know it too?

Sir Oliv. Aye, aye, every circumstance.

Sir Pet. What! about the closet and the screen?

Sir Oliv. Yes, and the little French milliner too. I never laughed more in my life.

Sir Pet. And a very pleasant jest it was.

Sir Oliv. This is your man of sentiment, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Oh, damn his sentiments!

Sir Oliv. You must have made a pretty appearance when Charles dragged you out of the closet.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, that was very diverting.

Sir Oliv. And egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down.

Sir Pet. My face when the screen was thrown down! Oh, yes! There's no bearing this. [*Aside.*

Sir Oliv. Come, come, my old friend, dont be vexed; for I cant help laughing for the soul of me. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Pet. Oh, laugh on! I am not vexed—no, no;

it is the pleasantest thing in the world. To be the standing jest of all one's acquaintance, 't is the happiest situation imaginable.

Rowl. See, sir, yonder's my Lady Teazle coming this way, and in tears: let me beg of you to be reconciled.

Sir Oliv. Well, I'll leave Rowley to mediate between you, and take my leave; but you must make haste after me to Mr. Surface's, where I go, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy. *[Exit.]*

Sir Pet. I'll be with you at the discovery; I should like to see it, though it is a vile unlucky place for discoveries. Rowley *[looking out]*, she's not coming this way.

Rowl. No, sir; but she has left the room door open, and waits your coming.

Sir Pet. Well, certainly mortification is very becoming in a wife. Dont you think I had best let her pine a little longer?

Rowl. Oh, sir, that's being too severe!

Sir Pet. I dont think so. The letter I found from Charles was evidently intended for her.

Rowl. Indeed, Sir Peter, you are much mistaken.

Sir Pet. If I were convinced of that. See, Mr. Rowley, she looks this way. What a remarkable elegant turn of the head she has! I have a good mind to go to her.

Rowl. Do, dear sir.

Sir Pet. But when it is known that we are reconciled, I shall be laughed at more than ever.

Rowl. Let them laugh on, and retort their malice upon themselves by showing them you can be happy in spite of their slander.

Sir Pet. Faith, and so I will, Mr. Rowley; and my Lady Teazle and I may still be the happiest couple in the country.

Rowl. Oh, fie, Sir Peter! He that lays aside suspicion—

Sir Pet. My dear Rowley, if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment again; I have had enough of that to last the remainder of my life. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. JOSEPH's Library.

Enter JOSEPH and LADY SNEERWELL.

L. Sneer. Impossible! Will not Sir Peter be immediately reconciled to Charles, and no longer oppose his union to Maria?

Jos. Can passion mend it?

L. Sneer. No, nor cunning neither. I was a fool to league with such a blunderer.

Jos. Sure, my Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer in this affair, and yet, you see, I bear it with calmness.

L. Sneer. Because the disappointment does not reach your heart; your interest was only concerned. Had you felt for Maria what I do for that unfortunate libertine your brother, you would not be dissuaded from taking every revenge in your power.

Jos. Why, will you rail at me for the disappointment?

L. Sneer. Are you not the cause? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter, and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavour to seduce his wife. I hate such an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly, and never prospers.

Jos. Well, I own I am to blame—I have deviated from the direct rule of wrong; yet I cannot think circumstances are so bad as your ladyship apprehends.

L. Sneer. No!

Jos. You tell me you have made another trial of

Snake; that he still proves steady to our interest; and that he is ready, if occasion requires, to swear to a contract having been passed between Charles and your ladyship.

L. Sneer. And what then?

Jos. Why, the letters which have been so carefully circulated will corroborate his evidence and prove the truth of the assertion. But I expect my uncle every moment, and must beg your ladyship to retire into the next room.

L. Sneer. But if he should find me out?

Jos. I have no fear of that. Sir Peter wont tell for his own sake, and I shall soon find out Sir Oliver's weak side.

L. Sneer. Nay, I have no doubt of your abilities, only be constant to one villainy at a time.

Jos. Well, I will, I will. [*Exit Lady Sneerwell.*] It is confounded hard though to be baited by one's confederates in wickedness. [*Knocking.*] Whom have we got here? My uncle Oliver, I suppose. Oh, old Stanley again! How came he here? He must not stay—

Enter SIR OLIVER.

I told you already, Mr. Stanley, that it was not in my power to relieve you.

Sir Oliv. But I hear, sir, that Sir Oliver is arrived, and perhaps he might.

Jos. Well, sir, you cannot stay now, sir, but any other time, sir, you shall certainly be relieved.

Sir Oliv. Oh, Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

Jos. I must insist upon your going. Indeed, Mr. Stanley, you cant stay.

Sir Oliv. Positively I must see Sir Oliver.

Jos. Then positively you shant stay.

[*Pushing him out.*]

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Heyday! what's the matter? Why, who the devil have we got here! What! my little Premium! Oh, brother, you must not hurt my little broker. But hark'ye, Joseph; what, have you been borrowing money too?

Jos. Borrowing money! No, brother. We expect my uncle Oliver here every minute, and Mr. Stanley insists upon seeing him.

Char. Stanley! Why his name is Premium..

Jos. No, no! I tell you his name is Stanley.

Char. But I tell you again his name is Premium.

Jos. It dont signify what his name is.

Char. No more it dont, as you say, brother; for I suppose he goes by half an hundred names, besides A.B. at the coffee-houses. But old Noll must not come and catch my little broker here neither.

Jos. Mr. Stanley, I beg—

Char. And I beg, Mr. Premium—

Jos. You must go, indeed, Mr. Stanley.

Char. Aye, you must go, Mr. Premium.

[Both pushing him.]

Enter SIR PETER, LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, and ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. What, my old friend, Sir Oliver! what's the matter? In the name of wonder, were there ever two such ungracious nephews, to assault their uncle at his first visit.

L. Teaz. On my word, sir, it was well we came to your rescue.

Jos. Charles!

Char. Joseph!

Jos. Now our ruin is complete.

Char. Very.

Sir Pet. You find, Sir Oliver, your necessitous character of old Stanley could not protect you.

Sir Oliv. No! nor Premium neither. The necessities of the former could not extract a shilling from that benevolent gentleman there; and with the other I stood a worse chance than my ancestors, and had like to have been knocked down without being bid for. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley, look upon that elder nephew of mine; you both know what I have done for him, and how gladly I would have looked upon half my fortune as held only in trust for him. Judge then of my surprise and disappointment, at finding him destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude!

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, I should be as much surprised as you if I did not know him to be artful, selfish, and hypocritical.

L. Teaz. And if he pleads not guilty to all this, let him call on me to finish his character.

Sir Pet. Then I believe we need not add more; for if he knows himself, it will be a sufficient punishment for him that he is known by the world.

Char. If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me by and by? *[Aside.]*

Yos. Sir Oliver, will you not honour me with a hearing?

Char. Now if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I should have time to recollect myself.

[Aside.]

Sir Pet. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself entirely.

Yos. I trust I could, sir.

Sir Oliv. Psha! *[Turns away from him.]* And I suppose you could justify yourself too. *[To Charles.]*

Char. Not that I know of, sir.

Sir Oliv. What, my little Premium was let too much into the secret.

Char. Why yes, sir, but they were only family secrets, and should go no farther.

Rowl. Come, come, Sir Oliver, I am sure you cannot look upon Charles's follies with anger.

Sir Oliv. No, nor with gravity neither. Do you know, Sir Peter, the young rogue has been selling me his ancestors; I have bought judges and staff-officers by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as old china.

[During this speech Charles laughs behind his hat.]

Char. Why, that I have made free with the family canvas is true; my ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it; but believe me when I tell you (and upon my soul I would not say it, if it were not so), if I don't appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction at seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

[Embraces him.]

Sir Oliv. Charles, I forgive you; give me your hand again; the little ill-looking fellow over the settee has made your peace for you.

Char. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

L. Teas. Sir Oliver, here is another, with whom I dare say Charles is no less anxious to be reconciled.

Sir Oliv. I have heard something of that attachment before, and with the lady's leave—if I construe right, that blush—

Sir Pet. Well, child, speak for yourself.

Mar. I have little more to say, than that I wish him happy; and for any influence I might once have had over his affections, I most willingly resign them to one who has a better claim to them.

Sir Pet. Eh! what's the matter now? While he

was a rake and a profligate, you would hear of nobody else; and now that he is likely to reform, you won't have him. What's the meaning of all this?

Mar. His own heart, and Lady Sneerwell, can best inform you.

Char. Lady Sneerwell!

Jos. I am very sorry, brother, I am obliged to speak to this point; but justice demands it from me; and Lady Sneerwell's wrongs can no longer be concealed.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Sir Pet. Another French milliner! I believe he has one in every room in the house.

L. Sneer. Ungrateful Charles! well may you seem confounded and surprised at the indelicate situation to which your perfidy has reduced me.

Char. Pray, uncle, is this another of your plots? for, as I live, this is the first time I ever heard of it.

Jos. There is but one witness, I believe, necessary for the business.

Sir Pet. And that witness is Mr. Snake—you were perfectly in the right in bringing him with you. Let him appear.

Rowl. Desire Mr. Snake to walk in. It is rather unlucky, madam, that he should be brought to confront, and not support your ladyship.

Enter SNAKE.

L. Sneer. I am surprised! what! speak, villain! have you too conspired against me?

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons; I must own you paid me very liberally for the lying questions, but I have unfortunately been offered double for speaking the truth.

Sir Pet. Plot and counter-plot. I give your ladyship much joy of your negociation.

L. Sneer. May the torment of despair and disappointment light upon you all! [*Going.*]

L. Teaz. Hold, Lady Sneerwell; before you go, give me leave to return you thanks, for the trouble you and this gentleman took, in writing letters in my name to Charles, and answering them yourself; and, at the same time, I must beg you will present my compliments to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, returns the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

L. Sneer. You too, madam! Provoking insolent! may your husband live these fifty years! [*Exit.*]

L. Teaz. O Lord! what a malicious creature it is!

Sir Pet. Not for her last wish, I hope.

L. Teaz. Oh, no, no!

Sir Pet. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself? [*To Joseph.*]

Jos. Sir, I am so confounded that Lady Sneerwell should impose upon us all by suborning Mr. Snake, that I know not what to say—but—lest her malice should prompt her to injure my brother—I had better follow her. [*Exit.*]

Sir Pet. Moral to the last.

Sir Oliv. Marry her, Joseph, marry her if you can. Oil and vinegar—you'll do very well together.

Rowl. Mr. Snake, I believe we have no further occasion for you.

Snake. Before I go, I must beg pardon of these good ladies and gentlemen for whatever trouble I have been the humble instrument of causing.

Sir Pet. You have made amends by your open confession.

Snake. But I must beg as a favour that it may never be spoken of.

Sir Pet. What! are you ashamed of having done one good action in your life?

Snake. Sir, I request you to consider that I live by the badness of my character; and if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

[*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. Never fear; we shant traduce you by saying anything in your praise.

Sir Pet. There's a precious rogue for you.

L. Teaz. You see, Sir Oliver, it needed no great persuasion to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir Oliv. So much the better. I'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Sir Pet. What! before you ask the girl's consent!

Char. I have done that a long time since—above a minute ago—and she looked——

Mar. Oh, fie, Charles! I protest, Sir Peter; there has not been a word said.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, the less the better [*joining their hands*]*—there—and may your loves never know abatement!*

Sir Pet. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I—intend to do.

Char. I suspect, Rowley, I owe much to you.

Sir Oliv. You do indeed.

Rowl. Sir, if I had failed in my endeavours to serve you, you would have been indebted to me for the attempt; but deserve to be happy, and you overpay me.

Sir Pet. Aye, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

Char. Look ye, Sir Peter, as to reforming, I shall make no promises, and that I take to be the strongest proof that I intend setting about it. But here shall be my monitor, my gentle guide. Can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst waive thy beauty's
 sway,

Thou still must rule, because I will obey;
An humble fugitive from folly view,
No sanctuary near but love and you;
You can indeed each anxious fear remove,
But even scandal dies—if you approve.

[Exeunt Omnes.]

EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY MR. COLMAN.

Spoken in the character of Lady Teazle.

I WHO was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind, must now blow all one way;
Bend all my cares, my studies and my vows,
To one old rusty weather-cock—my spouse;
So wills our virtuous bard—the pye-bald Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays.

Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives!
Each bring his dear to town—all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honour.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath, it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves
Such is my case—and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er;
And say, ye fair, was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me, untimely blasted in her bloom;
Like me, condemned to such a dismal doom:
Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early-crowing cock?
The melancholy ticking of a clock?

In the lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded.
With humble curates can I now retire
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire),
And at backgammon mortify my soul,
That pants for Loo, or flutters at a Vole ;
Seven's the main ! dear sound ! that must expire,
Roast at hot cockles round a Christmas fire !
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
"Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content,
Farewell the plumed head—the cushioned tete,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat !
The spirit-stirring drum !—card drums I mean—
Spadille, odd trick, pam, basto, king and queen.
And you, ye knockers, that with brazen throat,
The welcome visitor's approach denote,
Farewell ! All quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town,
Farewell ! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er !"

All this I told our bard ; he smiled, and said 't was clear
I ought to play deep tragedy next year :
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in those solemn periods stalked away.
"Blest were the fair, like you her faults who stopped,
And closed her follies when the curtain dropped !
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage !"

THE DUENNA.

A COMIC OPERA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY PERFORMED AT COVENT-GARDEN.

DON FERDINAND	..	..	..	..	Mr. Mattocks.
MENDOZA	..	..	..	..	Mr. Quick.
DON JEROME	..	..	..	..	Mr. Wilson.
DON ANTONIO	..	..	..	..	Mr. Dubellamy.
FATHER PAUL	..	..	..	..	Mr. Mahon.
LOPEZ	..	..	..	..	Mr. Wewitzer.
DON CARLOS	..	..	..	..	Mr. Leonl.
FRANCIS	..	..	..	..	Mr. Fox.
LAY BROTHER	..	..	..	..	Mr. Baker.
DONNA LOUISA	..	..	..	..	Mrs. Mattocks.
DONNA CLARA	..	..	..	..	Mrs. Cargill.
THE DUENNA	..	..	..	..	Mrs. Green.

THE DUENNA.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The Street.*

Enter LOPRZ, with a dark lantern.

Lop. Past three o'clock! soh! a notable hour for one of my regular disposition, to be strolling like a bravo through the streets of Seville! well, of all services, to serve a young lover is the hardest; not that I am an enemy to love, but my love and my master's differ strangely. Don Ferdinand is much too gallant to eat, drink, or sleep—now, my love gives me an appetite; then I am fond of dreaming of my mistress, and I love dearly to toast her. This cannot be done without good sleep, and good liquor; hence my partiality to a feather-bed, and a bottle. What a pity now that I have not further time for reflection! but my master expects thee, honest Lopez, to secure his retreat from Donna Clara's window, as I guess. [*Music without.*] Oh, sure I heard music! soh, soh, who have we here? Oh, Don Antonio, my master's friend, come from the masquerade, to serenade my young mistress, Donna Louisa, I suppose: soh! we shall have the old gentleman up presently—lest he should miss his son, I had best lose no time in getting to my post.

Enter ANTONIO, with Masks and Music.

Song. ANTONIO.

Tell me, my lute, can thy soft strain
So gently speak thy master's pain?
So softly sing, so humbly sigh,
That, though my sleeping love shall know
Who sings— who sighs below,
Her rosy slumbers shall not fly?
Thus, may some vision whisper more
Than ever I dare speak before.

First Mask. Antonio, your mistress will never wake while you sing so dolefully; love, like a cradled infant, is lulled by a sad melody.

Ant. I do not wish to disturb her rest.

First Mask. The reason is, because you know she does not regard you enough to appear, if you awaked her.

Ant. Nay, then, I'll convince you. *[Sings.*

The breath of morn bids hence the night,
Unveil those beauteous eyes, my fair;
For till the dawn of love is there,
I feel no day, I own no light.

LOUISA. *Replies from a window.*

Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
Waking the dawn did bless my sight,
'Tis Phœbus sure, that woos, I cried,
Who speaks in song, who moves in light.

DON JEROME. *From a window.*

What vagabonds are these I hear,
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, scraping, whining, canting?
Fly, scurvy minstrels, fly!

- Lou.* Nay, pr'ythee, father, why so rough?
Ant. An humble lover I.
Jer. How durst you, daughter, lend an ear
 To such deceitful stuff?
 Quick, from the window fly!
Lou. Adieu, Antonio!
Ant. Must you go?
Lou. } We soon, perhaps, may meet again;
Ant. } For though hard fortune is our foe,
 The god of love will fight for us.
Jer. Reach me the blunderbuss.
Ant. & L. The god of love, who knows our pain—
Jer. Hence, or these slugs are through your brain.
[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. *A Piazza.**Enter FERDINAND and LOPEZ.*

Lop. Truly, sir, I think that a little sleep, once in a week or so—

Ferd. Peace, fool! dont mention sleep to me.

Lop. No, no, sir, I dont mention your low-bred, vulgar sound sleep; but I cant help thinking that a gentle slumber, or half an hour's dozing, if it were only for the novelty of the thing—

Ferd. Peace, booby, I say! O Clara, dear, cruel disturber of my rest.

Lop. And of mine too. [*Aside.*]

Ferd. Sdeath! to trifle with me at such a juncture as this—now to stand on punctilios—love me! I dont believe she ever did.

Lop. Nor I either. [*Aside.*]

Ferd. Or is it that her sex never know their desires for an hour together?

Lop. They know them oftener than they'll own them.

me, and then I discovered that she hadn't a good feature in her face.

[Sings.

I ne'er could any lustre see
 In eyes that could not look on me ;
 I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
 But where my own did hope to sip.
 Has the maid who seeks my heart,
 Cheeks of rose, untouched by art?
 I will own the colour true,
 When yielding blushes aid their hue.
 Is her hand so soft and pure?
 I must press it, to be sure !
 Nor can I be certain then,
 Till it, grateful, press again ;
 Must I, with attentive eye,
 Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
 I will do so, when I see
 That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Besides, Ferdinand, you have full security in my love for your sister ; help me there, and I can never disturb you with Clara.

Ferd. As far as I can, consistently with the honour of our family, you know I will ; but there must be no eloping.

Ant. And yet, now, you would carry off Clara ?

Ferd. Ay, that's a different case—we never mean that others should act to our sisters and wives, as we do to others. But, to-morrow, Clara is to be forced into a convent.

Ant. Well, and am not I as unfortunately circumstanced ? To-morrow your father forces Louisa to marry Isaac, the Portuguese—but come with me, and we'll devise something, I warrant.

Ferd. I must go home.

Ant. Well, adieu!

Ferd. But, Antonio, if you did not love my sister, you have too much honour and friendship to supplant me with Clara?

Air. ANTONIO.

Friendship is the bond of reason;
But if beauty disapprove,
Heaven dissolves all other treason
In the heart that's true to love.

The faith which to my friend I swore,
As a civil oath I view;
But, to the charms which I adore,
'Tis religion to be true.

Then if to one I false must be,
Can I doubt which to prefer—
A breach of social faith with thee,
Or sacrilege to love and her?

[*Exit.*

Ferd. There is always a levity in Antonio's manner of replying to me on this subject that is very alarming. Sdeath! if Clara should love him after all! [Sings.

Though cause for suspicion appears,
Yet proofs of her love, too, are strong;
I'm a wretch if I'm right in my fears,
And unworthy of bliss if I'm wrong.
What heart-breaking torments from jealousy flow,
Ah! none but the jealous—the jealous can know!

When blest with the smiles of my fair,
I know not how much I adore;
Those smiles let another but share,
And I wonder I prized them no more!
Then whence can I hope a relief from my woe,
When the falser she seems, still the fonder I grow!

[*Exit.*

Lou. But stands like a dead wall between church and synagogue, or like the blank leaves between the Old and New Testament.

Jer. Anything more?

Ferd. The most remarkable part of his character is, his passion for deceit and tricks of cunning.

Lou. Though, at the same time, the fool predominates so much over the knave, that I am told he is generally the dupe of his own art.

Ferd. True, like an unskilful gunner, he usually misses his aim, and is hurt by the recoil of his own piece.

Jer. Anything more?

Lou. To sum up all, he has the worst fault a husband can have—he's not my choice.

Jer. But you are his; and choice on one side is sufficient—two lovers should never meet in marriage—be you sour as you please, he is sweet-tempered, and for your good fruit, there's nothing like ingrafting on a crab.

Lou. I detest him as a lover, and shall ten times more as a husband.

Jer. I don't know that—marriage generally makes a great change—but to cut the matter short, will you have him or not?

Lou. There is nothing else I could disobey you in.

Jer. Do you value your father's peace?

Lou. So much, that I will not fasten on him the regret of making an only daughter wretched.

Jer. Very well, ma'am, then mark me—never more will I see or converse with you till you return to your duty—no reply—this and your chamber shall be your apartments. I never will stir out, without leaving you under lock and key, and when I'm at home, no creature can approach you but through my library—we'll try who can be most obstinate—out of my sight—there remain till you know your duty. *[Pushes her out.]*

Ferd. Surely, sir, my sister's inclinations should be consulted in a matter of this kind, and some regard paid to Don Antonio, being my particular friend.

Jer. That, doubtless, is a very great recommendation—I certainly have not paid sufficient respect to it.

Ferd. There is not a man living I would sooner choose for a brother-in-law.

Jer. Very possible; and if you happen to have e'er a sister, who is not at the same time a daughter of mine, I'm sure I shall have no objection to the relationship—but at present, if you please, we'll drop the subject.

Ferd. Nay, sir, 'tis only my regard for my sister makes me speak.

Jer. Then pray, sir, in future, let your regard for your father make you hold your tongue.

Ferd. I have done, sir—I shall only add a wish, that you would reflect what at our age you would have felt, had you been crossed in your affection for the mother of her you are so severe to.

Jer. Why, I must confess I had a great affection for your mother's ducats, but that was all, boy—I married her for her fortune, and she took me in obedience to her father, and a very happy couple we were—we never expected any love from one another, and so we were never disappointed. If we grumbled a little now and then, it was soon over, for we were never fond enough to quarrel, and when the good woman died, why, why—I had as lieve she had lived, and I wish every widower in Seville could say the same. I shall now go and get the key of this dressing-room. So, good son, if you have any lecture in support of disobedience to give your sister, it must be brief; so make the best of your time, d'ye hear. [Exit.

Ferd. I fear, indeed, my friend Antonio has little to hope for—however, Louisa has firmness, and my

whine till your heart breaks, but I'll not hear one word of excuse—soh! you are right to be dumb—this way, this way. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter DUENNA.

Duen. So speed you well, sagacious Don Jerome! Oh, rare effects of passion and obstinacy—now shall I try whether I cant play the fine lady as well as my mistress, and if I succeed I may be a fine lady for the rest of my life—I'll lose no time to equip myself. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV. *The Court before DON JEROME'S house.*

Enter DON JEROME and LOUISA.

Jer. Come, mistress, there is your way—the world lies before you, so troop, thou antiquated Eve, thou original sin—ho'd, yonder is some fellow skulking, perhaps it is Antonio—go to him, d'ye hear, and tell him to make you amends, and as he has got you turned away, tell him I say it is but just he should take you himself; go. *[Exit Louisa.]* Soh! I am rid of her, thank heaven! and now I shall be able to keep my oath, and confine my daughter with better security. *[Exit.]*

SCENE V. *The Piazza.*

Enter CLARA and her MAID.

Maid. But where, madam, is it you intend to go?

Clara. Anywhere to avoid the selfish violence of my mother-in-law, and Ferdinand's insolent importunity.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, since we have profited by Don Ferdinand's key in making our escape, I think we had best find him, if it were only to thank him.

Clara. No, he offended me exceedingly. *[Retire.]*

Enter LOUISA.

Lou. So I have succeeded in being turned out of doors, but how shall I find Antonio? I dare not enquire for him, for fear of being discovered; I would

send to my friend Clara, but that I doubt her prudery would condemn me.

Maid. Then suppose, ma'am, you were to try if your friend Donna Louisa would not receive you.

Clara. No, her notions of filial duty are so severe, she would certainly betray me.

Lou. Clara is of a cold temper, and would think this step of mine highly forward.

Clara. Louisa's respect for her father is so great, she would not credit the unkindness of mine.

[Louisa turns, and sees Clara and Maid.]

Lou. Ha! who are those? sure one is Clara—if it be, I'll trust her—Clara!

[Advances.]

Clara. Louisa! and in masquerade too!

Lou. You will be more surprised when I tell you, that I have run away from my father.

Clara. Surprised indeed! and I should certainly chide you most horridly, only that I have just run away from mine.

Lou. My dear Clara!

[Embrace.]

Clara. Dear sister truant! and whither are you going?

Lou. To find the man I love to be sure. And, I presume, you would have no aversion to meet with my brother?

Clara. Indeed I should—he has behaved so ill to me, I don't believe I shall ever forgive him.

[Sings.]

When sable night, each drooping plant restoring,
Wept o'er the flowers her breath did cheer,
As some sad widow o'er her babe deploring,
Wakes its beauty with a tear;
When all did sleep, whose weary hearts did borrow
One hour from love and care to rest,
Lo! as I pressed my couch, in silent sorrow,
My lover caught me to his breast;

He vowed he came to save me
From those who would enslave me!

Then kneeling,
Kisses stealing,

Endless faith he swore :

But soon I chid him thence,
For had his fond pretence
Obtained one favour then,
And he had pressed again,

I feared my treacherous heart might grant him more.

Lou. Well, for all this, I would have sent him to plead his pardon, but that I would not yet awhile have him know of my flight. And where do you hope to find protection?

Clara. The lady abbess of the convent of St. Catherine is a near relation and kind friend of mine. I shall be secure with her, and you had best go thither with me.

Lou. No; I am determined to find Antonio first; and, as I live, here comes the very man I will employ to seek him for me.

Clara. Who is he? he's a strange figure!

Lou. Yes; that sweet creature is the man whom my father has fixed on for my husband.

Clara. And will you speak to him? are you mad?

Lou. He is the fittest man in the world for my purpose, for, though I was to have married him to-morrow, he is the only man in Seville, who, I am sure, never saw me in his life.

Clara. And how do you know him?

Lou. He arrived but yesterday, and he was shown to me from the window, as he visited my father.

Clara. Well, I'll begone.

Lou. Hold, my dear Clara—a thought has struck

me—will you give me leave to borrow your name, as I see occasion.

Clara. It will but disgrace you, but use it as you please. I dare not stay [*Going*]; but, Louisa, if you should see your brother, be sure you dont inform him that I have taken refuge with the dame prior of the convent of St. Catherine, on the left hand side of the piazza which leads to the church of St. Anthony.

Lou. Ha, ha, ha! I'll be very particular in my direction where he may not find you. [*Exeunt Clara and Maid.*] So, my swain, yonder, has done admiring himself and draws nearer. [*Retires.*]

Enter ISAAC and CARLOS; ISAAC with a pocket glass.

Isaac. [*Looking in the glass.*] I tell you, friend Carlos; I will please myself in the habit of my chin.

Car. But, my dear friend, how can you think to please a lady with such a face?

Isaac. Why, what's the matter with the face? I think it is a very engaging face; and, I am sure, a lady must have very little taste, who could dislike my beard. [*Sees Louisa.*] See now! I'll die if here is not a little damsel struck with it already.

Lou. Signor, are you disposed to oblige a lady, who greatly wants your assistance. [*Unveils.*]

Isaac. Egad, a very pretty black-eyed girl! she has certainly taken a fancy to me, Carlos—first, ma'am, I must beg the favour of your name.

Lou. So! it's well I am provided. [*Aside.*] My name, sir, is Donna Clara D'Almanza.

Isaac. What! Don Guzman's daughter? i'faith, I just now heard she was missing.

Lou. But sure, sir, you have too much gallantry and honour to betray me, whose fault is love?

Isaac. So, a passion for me, poor girl! why, ma'am,

as for betraying you, I don't see how I could get any thing by it; so you may rely on my honour; but as for your love, I am sorry your case is so desperate.

Lou. Why so, signor?

Isaac. Because I am positively engaged to another, ain't I, Carlos?

Lou. Nay, but hear me.

Isaac. No, no; what should I hear for? It is impossible for me to court you in an honourable way; and, for any thing else, if I were to comply now, I suppose you have some ungrateful brother, or cousin, who would want to cut my throat for my civility—so, truly, you had best go home again.

Lou. Odious wretch! [*Aside.*] But, good signior, it is Antonio D'Ercilla, on whose account I have eloped.

Isaac. How! what! it is not with me then, that you are in love?

Lou. No, indeed, it is not.

Isaac. Then you are a forward, impertinent simpleton! and I shall certainly acquaint your father.

Lou. Is this your gallantry?

Isaac. Yet hold—Antonio D'Ercilla, did you say? egad, I may make something of this—Antonio D'Ercilla?

Lou. Yes; and, if ever you hope to prosper in love, you will bring me to him.

Isaac. By St. Iago and I will too—Carlos, this Antonio is one who rivals me (as I have heard) with Louisa—now, if I could hamper him with this girl, I should have the field to myself; eh, Carlos! A lucky thought, isn't it?

Car. Yes, very good—very good—

Isaac. Ah! this little brain is never at a loss—cunning Isaac! cunning rogue! Donna Clara, will you trust yourself a while to my friend's direction?

Lou. May I rely on you, good signor?

Car. Lady, it is impossible I should deceive you.

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you ;
For though your tongue no promise claimed,
Your charms would make me true.

To you no soul shall bear deceit,
No stranger offer wrong,
But friends in all the aged you'll meet ;
And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have blest
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passions rest,
And act a brother's part.

Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to suffer wrong ;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And brothers in the young.

Isaac. You'll conduct the lady to my lodgings,
Carlos ; I must haste to Don Jerome—perhaps you know
Louisa, ma'am. She is divinely handsome—isn't she ?

Low. You must excuse me for not joining with you.

Isaac. Why, I have heard it on all hands.

Low. Her father is uncommonly partial to her ; but
I believe you will find she has rather a matronly air.

Isaac. Carlos, this is all envy—you pretty girls
never speak well of one another—hark'ye, find out
Antonio, and I'll saddle him with this scrape, I warrant !
Oh, 't was the luckiest thought ! Donna Clara, your
very obedient—Carlos, to your post.

Isaac. My mistress expects me, and I must go to her,
Or how can I hope for a smile ?

Low. Soon may you return a prosperous wooer,
But think what I suffered the while ;

Alone, and away from the man whom I love,
In strangers I'm forced to confide.

Isaac. Dear lady, my friend you may trust, and he'll
prove
Your servant, protector, and guide.

Car. Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.
Canst thou trust, and I deceive thee?
Art thou sad, and shall I grieve thee?
Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.

Lou. Never mayst thou happy be,
If in aught thou'rt false to me.

Isaac. Never may he happy be,
If in aught he's false to thee.

Car. Never may I happy be,
If in aught I'm false to thee.

Lou. Never mayst thou, &c.

Isaac. Never may he, &c.

Car. Never may I, &c. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Library in DON JEROME'S House.*

Enter DON JEROME and ISAAC.

Jer. Ha, ha, ha! run away from her father! has she
given him the slip! Ha, ha, ha! poor Don Guzman!

Isaac. Ay; and I am to conduct her to Antonio;
by which means you see I shall hamper him so that he
can give me no disturbance with your daughter—this
is trap, isn't it? a nice stroke of cunning, eh!

Jer. Excellent! excellent! yes, yes, carry her to

him, hamper him by all means, ha, ha, ha! poor Don Guzman! an old fool! imposed on by a girl!

Isaac. Nay, they have the cunning of serpents, that's the truth on't.

Jer. Paha! they are cunning only when they have fools to deal with—why dont my girl play me such a trick—let her cunning overreach my caution, I say—eh, little Isaac?

Isaac. True, true; or let me see any of the sex make a fool of me. No, no, egad, little Solomon (as my aunt used to call me) understands tricking a little too well.

Jer. Ay, but such a driveller as Don Guzman.

Isaac. And such a dupe as Antonio.

Jer. True; sure never were seen such a couple of credulous simpletons; but come, 'tis time you should see my daughter—you must carry on the siege by yourself, friend Isaac.

Isaac. Sir, you'll introduce—

Jer. Go! I have sworn a solemn oath not to see or speak to her till she renounces her disobedience; win her to that, and she gains a father and a husband at once.

Isaac. Gad, I shall never be able to deal with her alone; nothing keeps me in such awe as perfect beauty—now there is something consoling and encouraging in ugliness. *[Sings.*

Give Isaac the nymph who no beauty can boast,
But health and good humour to make her his toast
If straight, I dont mind whether slender or fat,
And six feet or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion, I vow I dont care;
If brown it is lasting, more pleasing if fair;
And though in her face I no dimples should see,
Let her smile, and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddest that ever were seen,
And her eyes may be e'en any colour but green,
Be they light, grey, or black, their lustre and hue,
I swear I've no choice, only let her have two.

'Tis true I'd dispense with a throne on her back,
And white teeth, I own, are genteeler than black ;
A little round chin too's a beauty, I've heard,
But I only desire that she mayn't have a beard.

Jer. You will change your note, my friend, when you've seen Louisa.

Isaac. Oh, Don Jerome, the honour of your alliance—

Jer. Ay, but her beauty will affect you—she is, though I say it, who am her father, a very prodigy—there you will see features with an eye like mine—yes i' faith, there is a kind of wicked sparkling—something of a roguish brightness, that shows her to be my own.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jer. Then, when she smiles, you'll see a little dimple in one cheek only ; a beauty it is certainly, yet you shall not say which is prettiest, the cheek with the dimple, or the cheek without.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jer. Then the roses on those cheeks are shaded with a sort of velvet down, that gives a delicacy to the glow of health.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jer. 'Her skin pure dimity, yet more fair, being spangled here and there with a golden freckle.

Isaac. Charming pretty rogue ! pray how is the tone of her voice ?

Jer. Remarkably pleasing, but if you could prevail on her to sing, you would be enchanted, she is a

nightingale—a Virginia nightingale—but come, come ; her maid shall conduct you to her antechamber.

Isaac. Well, egad, I'll pluck up resolution, and meet her frowns intrepidly.

Jer. Ay! woo her briskly—win her, and give me a proof of your address, my little Solomon.

Isaac. But hold, I expect my friend Carlos to call on me here. If he comes, will you send him to me?

Jer. I will—Lauretta, come—she'll show you to the room—what! do you droop? here's a mournful face to make love with! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. LOUISA'S *Dressing Room.*

Enter MAID and ISAAC.

Maid. Sir, my mistress will wait on you presently.

Isaac. When she's at leisure—dont hurry her.
[*Exit Maid.*] I wish I had ever practised a love scene—I doubt I shall make a poor figure—I couldn't be more afraid if I was going before the Inquisition—so! the door opens—yes, she's coming—the very rustling of her silk has a disdainful sound.

Enter DUENNA, dressed as LOUISA.

Now daren't I look round for the soul of me ; her beauty will certainly strike me dumb, if I do. I wish she'd speak first.

Duen. Sir, I attend your pleasure.

Isaac. So the ice is broke, and a pretty civil beginning too! hem ; madam—miss—I'm all attention.

Duen. Nay, sir, 'tis I who should listen, and you propose.

Isaac. Egad, this isn't so disdainful neither. I believe I may venture to look—no—I daren't—one glance of those roguish sparklers would fix me again.

When a tender maid,
Is first essayed,
By some admiring swain,
How her blushes rise,
If she meets his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain !
If he takes her hand, she trembles quite,
Touch her lips, and she swoons outright,
While a pit a pat, &c.
Her heart avows her fright.

But in time appear
Fewer signs of fear,
The youth she boldly views :
If her hand he grasps,
Or her bosom clasps,
No mantling blush ensues.
Then to church well pleased the lovers move,
While her smiles her contentment prove,
And a pit a pat, &c.
Her heart avows her love.

Isaac. Charming, ma'am ! Enchanting ! and truly your notes put me in mind of one that's very dear to me ; a lady, indeed, whom you greatly resemble.

Duen. How ! is there, then, another so dear to you ?

Isaac. Oh no, ma'am, you mistake ; it was my mother I meant.

Duen. Come, sir, I see you are amazed and confounded at my condescension, and know not what to say.

Isaac. It is very true, indeed, ma'am : but it is a judgment, I look on it as a judgment on me, for delaying to urge the time when you'll permit me to complete my happiness, by acquainting Don Jerome with your condescension.

Duen. Sir, I must frankly own to you, that I can never be yours with my father's consent.

Isaac. Good lack! how so?

Duen. When my father, in his passion, swore he would never see me again till I acquiesced in his will, I also made a vow, that I would never take a husband from his hand; nothing shall make me break that oath: but, if you have spirit and contrivance enough to carry me off without his knowledge, I'm yours.

Isaac. Hum!

Duen. Nay, sir, if you hesitate——

Isaac. [*Aside.*] I'faith, no bad whim this—if I take her at her word, I shall secure her fortune, and avoid making any settlement in return; thus I shall not only cheat the lover, but the father too—O cunning rogue, Isaac! ay, ay, let this little brain alone—egad, I'll take her in the mind.

Duen. Well, sir, what's your determination?

Isaac. Madam, I was dumb only from rapture—I applaud your spirit, and joyfully close with your proposal; for which, thus let me, on this lily hand, express my gratitude.

Duen. Well, sir, you must get my father's consent to walk with me in the garden. But, by no means inform him of my kindness to you.

Isaac. No, to be sure, that would spoil all. But trust me, when tricking is the word—let me alone for a piece of cunning: this very day you shall be out of his power.

Duen. Well, I leave the management of it all to you; I perceive plain, sir, that you are not one that can be easily outwitted.

Isaac. Egad, you're right, ma'am—you're right, i'faith.

Enter MAID.

Maid. Here's a gentleman at the door, who begs permission to speak with Signor Isaac.

Fer. Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are; but they have long discovered what a wonderful purifier gold is; and now, no one there regards pedigree in any thing but a horse. Oh, here comes Isaac! I hope he has prospered in his suit.

Ferd. Doubtless, that agreeable figure of his must have helped his suit surprisingly.

Fer. How now? [*Ferdinand walks aside.*]

Enter ISAAC.

Well, my friend, have you softened her?

Isaac. Oh, yes; I have softened her.

Fer. What! does she come to?

Isaac. Why, truly, she was kinder than I expected to find her.

Fer. And the dear little angel was civil, eh?

Isaac. Yes, the pretty little angel was very civil.

Fer. I'm transported to hear it—well, and you were astonished at her beauty, eh?

Isaac. I was astonished, indeed! pray, how old is miss?

Fer. How old? let me see—eight and twelve—she is twenty.

Isaac. Twenty!

Fer. Ay, to a month.

Isaac. Then, upon my soul, she is the oldest-looking girl of her age in Christendom!

Fer. Do you think so? but, I believe, you will not see a prettier girl.

Isaac. Here and there one.

Fer. Louisa has the family face.

Isaac. Yes, egad, I should have taken it for a family face, and one that has been in the family some time too.

[*Aside.*]

Jer. She has her father's eyes.

Isaac. Truly, I should have guessed them to have been so. If she had her mother's spectacles, I believe she would not see the worse. *[Aside.*

Jer. Her aunt Ursula's nose, and her grandmother's forehead, to a hair.

Isaac. Ay, faith, and her grandfather's chin, to a hair. *[Aside.*

Jer. Well, if she was but as dutiful as she's handsome—and harkye, friend Isaac, she is none of your made-up beauties—her charms are of the lasting kind.

Isaac. F'faith, so they should—for if she be but twenty now, she may double her age before her years will overtake her face.

Jer. Why, zounds, Master Isaac! you are not sneering, are you?

Isaac. Why now, seriously, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handsome?

Jer. By this light, she's as handsome a girl as any in Seville.

Isaac. Then, by these eyes, I think her as plain a woman as ever I beheld!

Jer. By St. Iago, you must be blind!

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are partial.

Jer. How! have I neither sense nor taste? If a fair skin, fine eyes, teeth of ivory, with a lovely bloom, and a delicate shape—if these, with a heavenly voice, and a world of grace, are not charms, I know not what you call beautiful.

Isaac. Good lack, with what eyes a father sees! As I have life, she is the very reverse of all this; as for the dimity skin you told me of, I swear, 'tis a thorough nankeen as ever I saw! for her eyes, their utmost merit is not squinting—for her teeth, where there is one of ivory, its neighbour is pure ebony, black and white

But if more deep the quarrel,
 Why, sooner drain the barrel,
 Than be the hateful fellow
 That's crabbed when he's mellow.

A bumper, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. ISAAC'S lodgings.

Enter LOUISA.

Lou. Was ever truant daughter so whimsically circumstanced as I am? I have sent my intended husband to look after my lover—the man of my father's choice is gone to bring me the man of my own—but how dispiriting is this interval of expectation.

Enter CARLOS.

So, friend, is Antonio found?

Car. I could not meet with him, lady; but I doubt not my friend Isaac will be here with him presently.

Lou. Oh, shame! you have used no diligence. Is this your courtesy to a lady, who has trusted herself to your protection?

Car. Indeed, madam, I have not been remiss.

Lou. Well, well; but if either of you had known how each moment of delay weighs upon the heart of her who loves, and waits the object of her love, oh, ye would not then have trifled thus!

Car. Alas, I know it well!

Lou. Were you ever in love then?

Car. I was, lady; but while I have life, will never be again.

Lou. Was your mistress so cruel?

Car. If she had always been so, I should have been
 happier.

[*Sings.*]

Oh, had my love ne'er smiled on me,
I ne'er had known such anguish;
But think how false, how cruel she,
To bid me cease to languish;
To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breathe on a flame half perished;
And then with cold and fixed disdain,
To kill the hope she cherished.

Not worse his fate, who on a wreck,
That drove as winds did blow it;
Silent had left the shattered deck,
To find a grave below it.
Then land was cried—no more resigned,
He glowed with joy to hear it;
Not worse his fate, his woe to find,
The wreck must sink ere near it.

Lon. As I live, here is your friend coming with Antonio. I'll retire a moment to surprise him. [*Exit.*]

Enter ISAAC and ANTONIO.

Ant. Indeed, my good friend, you must be mistaken. Clara D'Almanza in love with me, and employ you to bring me to meet her! It is impossible!

Isaac. That you shall see in an instant. Carlos. where is the lady? [*Carlos points to the door.*] In the next room, is she?

Ant. Nay, if that lady is really here, she certainly wants me to conduct her to a dear friend of mine, who has long been her lover.

Isaac. Psha! I tell you 'tis no such thing—you are the man she wants, and nobody but you. Here's ado to persuade you to take a pretty girl that's dying for you!

Ant. But I have no affection for this lady.

Isaac. And you have for Louisa, eh? but take my word for it, Antonio, you have no chance there—so you may as well secure the good that offers itself to you.

Ant. And could you reconcile it to your conscience, to supplant your friend?

Isaac. Pish! Conscience has no more to do with gallantry than it has with politics—why, you are no honest fellow if love cant make a rogue of you—so come, do go in, and speak to her at last.

Ant. Well, I have no objection to that.

Isaac. [*Opens the door.*] There—there she is—yonder by the window—get in, do. [*Pushes him in, and half shuts the door.*] Now, Carlos, now I shall hamper him, I warrant—stay, I'll peep how they go on—egad, he looks confoundedly posed—now she's coaxing him—see, Carlos, he begins to come to—ay, ay, he'll soon forget his conscience.

Car. Look, now they are both laughing!

Isaac. Ay, so they are—yes, yes, they are laughing at that dear friend he talked of—ay, poor devil, they have outwitted him.

Car. Now he's kissing her hand.

Isaac. Yes, yes, faith, they're agreed—he's caught, he's entangled—my dear Carlos, we have brought it about. Oh, this little cunning head! I'm a Machiavel—a very Machiavel.

Car. I hear somebody inquiring for you—I'll see who it is. [*Exit Carlos.*]

Enter ANTONIO and LOUISA.

Ant. Well, my good friend, this lady has so entirely convinced me of the certainty of your success at Don Jerome's, that I now resign my pretensions there.

Isaac. You never did a wiser thing, believe me—and as for deceiving your friend, that's nothing at all—tricking is all fair in love, isn't it, ma'am?

Lou. Certainly, sir, and I am particularly glad to find you are of that opinion.

Isaac. Oh, lud! yes, ma'am—let anyone outwit me that can, I say; but here, let me join your hands. There, you lucky rogue! I wish you happily married, from the bottom of my soul!

Lou. And I am sure if you wish it, no one else should prevent it.

Isaac. Now, Antonio, we are rivals no more; so let us be friends, will you?

Ant. With all my heart, Isaac.

Isaac. It is not every man, let me tell you, that would have taken such pains, or been so generous to a rival.

Ant. No, faith; I don't believe there's another beside yourself in all Spain.

Isaac. Well, but you resign all pretensions to the other lady?

Ant. That I do, most sincerely.

Isaac. I doubt you have a little hankering there still.

Ant. None in the least, upon my soul.

Isaac. I mean after her fortune.

Ant. No, believe me. You are heartily welcome to everything she has.

Isaac. Well, i'faith, you have the best of the bargain, as to beauty, twenty to one—now I'll tell you a secret—I am to carry off Louisa this very evening.

Lou. Indeed!

Isaac. Yes, she has sworn not to take a husband from her father's hand—so I've persuaded him to trust her to walk with me in the garden, and then we shall give him the slip.

Lou. And is Don Jerome to know nothing of this?

Isaac. Oh, lud, no! there lies the jest. Don't you see that by this I overreach him? I shall be entitled to the girl's fortune without settling a ducat on her, ha,

ha, ha! I'm a cunning dog, ain't I? A sly little villain, eh?

Ant. Ha, ha, ha! you are indeed!

Isaac. Roguish you'll say, but keen, eh—devilish keen.

Ant. So you are indeed—keen—very keen.

Isaac. And what a laugh we shall have at Don Jerome's when the truth comes out, eh?

Lou. Yes, I'll answer for it, we shall have a good laugh when the truth comes out, ha, ha, ha!

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Here are the dancers come to practise the fandango you intended to have honoured Donna Louisa with.

Isaac. Oh, I shant want them, but as I must pay them, I'll see a caper for my money. Will you excuse me?

Lou. Willingly.

Isaac. Here's my friend, whom you may command for any service. Madam, your most obedient. Antonio, I wish you all happiness. Oh, the easy blockhead! what a tool I have made of him! This was a masterpiece!

[*Exit.*

Lou. Carlos, will you be my guard again, and convey me to the convent of St. Catherine?

Ant. Why, Louisa—why should you go there?

Lou. I have my reasons, and you must not be seen to go with me; I shall write from thence to my father; perhaps, when he finds what he has driven me to, he may relent.

Ant. I have no hope from him. O Louisa! in these arms should be your sanctuary.

Lou. Be patient but for a little while—my father cannot force me from thence. But let me see you there before evening, and I will explain myself.

Ant. I shall obey.

Lou. Come, friend. Antonio, Carlos has been a lover himself.

Ant. Then he knows the value of his trust.

Car. You shall not find me unfaithful.

Trio.

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breast
Where love has been received a welcome guest ;
As wand'ring saints poor huts have sacred made,
He hallows ev'ry heart he once has swayed !
And when his presence we no longer share,
Still leaves compassion as a relic there. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Library.*

Enter JEROME and Servant.

Jer. Why, I never was so amazed in my life !
Louisa gone off with Isaac Mendoza ! what ! steal
away with the very man whom I wanted her to marry
—elope with her own husband, as it were—it is
impossible !

Serv. Her maid says, sir, they had your leave to
walk in the garden, while you were abroad. The door
by the shrubbery was found open, and they have not
been heard of since. [*Exit*

Jer. Well, it is the most unaccountable affair !
Sdeath ! there is certainly some infernal mystery in it I
cant comprehend !

Enter SECOND SERVANT, with a Letter.

Serv. Here is a letter, sir, from Signor Isaac. [*Exit.*

Jer. So, so, this will explain—ay, Isaac Mendoza—
let me see— [*Reads.*

Dearest Sir,—You must, doubtless, be much surprised at my flight with your daughter. [Yes, faith, and well I may.] I had the happiness to gain her heart at our first interview. [The devil you had!] But she having unfortunately made a vow not to receive a husband from your hands, I was obliged to comply with her whim. [So, so!] We shall shortly throw ourselves at your feet, and I hope you will have a blessing ready for one, who will then be—

Your son-in-law, ISAAC MENDOZA.

A whim, eh? Why, the devil's in the girl, I think! This morning she would die sooner than have him, and before evening she runs away with him! Well, well, my will's accomplished—let the motive be what it will—and the Portuguese, sure, will never deny to fulfil the rest of the article.

Enter SERVANT, with another Letter.

Serv. Sir, here's a man below, who says he brought this from my young lady, Donna Louisa. *[Exit.]*

Jer. How! yes! it is my daughter's hand indeed! lord, there was no occasion for them both to write; well, let's see what she says— *[Reads.]*

My dearest Father,—How shall I entreat your pardon for the rash step I have taken—how confess the motive. [Pish! hasn't Isaac just told me the motive? one would think they weren't together when they wrote.] If I have a spirit too resentful of ill-usage, I have also a heart as easily affected by kindness. [So, so, here the whole matter comes out; her resentment for Antonio's ill-usage has made her sensible of Isaac's kindness; yes, yes, it is all plain enough—well]—I am not married yet, though with a man, who, I am convinced, adores me. [Yes, yes, I dare say Isaac is very fond of her.] But I shall anxiously expect

your answer, in which, should I be so fortunate as to receive your consent, you will make completely happy,
Your ever affectionate daughter, LOUISA.

My consent? to be sure she shall have it! egad, I was never better pleased—I have fulfilled my resolution—I knew I should. Oh, there's nothing like obstinacy—Lewis!

Enter SERVANT.

Let the man who brought the last letter wait; and get me a pen and ink below. I am impatient to set poor Louisa's heart at rest—holloa! Lewis! Sancho!

Enter SERVANTS.

See, that there be a noble supper provided in the saloon to-night—serve up my best wines, and let me have music, d'ye hear?

Serv. Yes, sir.

[Exeunt.

Fer. And order all my doors to be thrown open—admit all guests, with masks or without masks—I'faith, we'll have a night of it. And I'll let them see how merry an old man can be.

[Sings.

Oh, the days when I was young,
 When I laughed in fortune's spite,
 Talked of love the whole day long,
 And with nectar crowned the night.
 Then it was, old father Care,
 Little recked I of thy frown,
 Half thy malice youth could bear,
 And the rest a bumper drown.

Truth, they say, lies in a well,
 Why, I vow, I ne'er could see,
 Let the water-drinkers tell,
 There it always lay for me.

For when sparkling wine went round,
 Never saw I falsehood's mask,
 But still honest truth I found,
 In the bottom of each flask.

True, at length my vigour's flown,
 I have years to bring decay;
 Few the locks that now I own,
 And the few I have are grey.
 Yet, old Jerome, thou mayst boast,
 While thy spirits do not tire,
 Still beneath thy age's frost,
 Glows a spark of youthful fire. [Exit.

SCENE II. *The new Piazza.*

Enter FERDINAND and LOPEZ.

Ferd. What, could you gather no tidings of her?
 Nor guess where she was gone? O Clara, Clara!

Lop. In truth, sir, I could not. That she was run
 away from her father, was in everybody's mouth; and
 that Don Guzman was in pursuit of her, was also a very
 common report—where she was gone, or what was
 become of her, no one could take upon them to say.

Ferd. Sdeath and fury, you blockhead! she cant be
 out of Seville.

Lop. So I said to myself, sir, Sdeath and fury, you
 blockhead, says I, she cant be out of Seville. Then
 some said she had hanged herself for love; and others
 have it, Don Antonio had carried her off.

Ferd. 'Tis false, scoundrel! no one said that.

Lop. Then I misunderstood them, sir.

Ferd. Go, fool, get home, and never let me see you
 again, till you bring me news of her. [Exit Lopez.]
 Oh, how my fondness for this ungrateful girl has hurt
 my disposition.

Enter ISAAC.

Isaac. So I have her safe, and have only to find a priest to marry us. Antonio now may marry Clara, or not, if he pleases!

Ferd. What? what was that you said of Clara?

Isaac. Oh, Ferdinand, my brother-in-law that shall be, who thought of meeting you!

Ferd. But what of Clara?

Isaac. I'faith, you shall hear. This morning, as I was coming down, I met a pretty damsel, who told me her name was Clara d'Almanza, and begged my protection.

Ferd. How?

Isaac. She said she had eloped from her father, Don Guzman, but that love for a young gentleman in Seville was the cause.

Ferd. Oh, heavens! did she confess it?

Isaac. Oh, yes, she confessed at once; but then, says she, my lover is not informed of my flight, nor suspects my intention.

Ferd. Dear creature! no more I did indeed! Oh, I am the happiest fellow! [*Aside.*] Well, Isaac.

Isaac. Why then she entreated me to find him out for her, and bring him to her.

Ferd. Good heavens, how lucky! Well, come along, let's lose no time. [*Pulling him.*]

Isaac. Zooks! where are we to go?

Ferd. Why, did any thing more pass?

Isaac. Any thing more! yes, the end on't was, that I was moved with her speeches, and complied with her desires.

Ferd. Well, and where is she?

Isaac. Where is she? why dont I tell you I complied with her request, and left her safe in the arms of her lover.

Ferd. Sdeath, you trifle with me! I have never seen her.

Isaac. You! O lud, no! How the devil should you? 'Twas Antonio she wanted; and with Antonio I left her.

Ferd. Hell and madness! [*Aside*] What, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Isaac. Ay, ay, the very man; and the best part of it was, he was shy of taking her at first. He talked a good deal about honour, and conscience, and deceiving some dear friend; but, lord, we soon overruled that.

Ferd. You did?

Isaac. Oh, yes, presently—such deceit, says he—Pish! says the lady, tricking is all fair in love. But then, my friend, says he—Psha! damn your friend, says I. So, poor wretch, he has no chance—no, no; he may hang himself as soon as he pleases.

Ferd. I must go, or I shall betray myself.

Isaac. But stay, Ferdinand, you haven't heard the best of the joke.

Ferd. Curse on your joke!

Isaac. Goodluck! what's the matter now? I thought to have diverted you.

Ferd. Be racked! tortured! damned——

Isaac. Why, sure you are not the poor devil of a lover, are you? I'faith, as sure as can be, he is. This is a better joke than t'other, ha, ha, ha!

Ferd. What, do you laugh; you vile, mischievous varlet? [*Collars him.*] But that you're beneath my anger, I'd tear your heart out. [*Throws him off.*]

Isaac. Oh, mercy! here's usage for a brother-in-law!

Ferd. But, harkye, rascal! tell me directly where these false friends are gone, or, by my soul——[*Draws.*]

Isaac. For heaven's sake, now, my dear brother-in-law, dont be in a rage—I'll recollect as well as I can.

Ferd. Be quick then!

Isaac. I will, I will—but people's memories differ—some have a treacherous memory—now mine is a cowardly memory; it takes to its heels, at sight of a drawn sword, it does, i'faith; and I could as soon fight as recollect.

Ferd. Zounds! tell me the truth, and I wont hurt you.

Isaac. No, no, I know you wont, my dear brother-in-law—but that ill-looking thing there—

Ferd. What, then, you wont tell me?

Isaac. Yes, yes, I will; I'll tell you all, upon my soul—but why need you listen sword in hand?

Ferd. Why there. [*Puts up.*] Now.

Isaac. Why then, I believe they are gone to—that is, my friend Carlos told me, he had left Donna Clara—dear Ferdinand, keep your hands off—at the convent of St. Catharine.

Ferd. St. Catharine.

Isaac. Yes; and that Antonio was to come to her there.

Ferd. Is this the truth?

Isaac. It is indeed—and all I know, as I hope for life.

Ferd. Well, coward, take your life. 'Tis that false, dishonourable Antonio, who shall feel my vengeance.

Isaac. Ay, ay, kill him—cut his throat, and welcome.

Ferd. But, for Clara—infamy on her! she is not worth my resentment.

Isaac. No more she is, my dear brother-in-law. I'faith, I would not be angry about her—she is not worth it, indeed.

Ferd. 'Tis false! she is worth the enmity of princes.

Isaac. True, true, so she is! and I pity you exceedingly for having lost her.

Ferd. Sdeath, you rascal! how durst you talk of pitying me!

Isaac. Oh, dear brother-in-law, I beg pardon, I dont pity you in the least, upon my soul.

Ferd. Get hence, fool, and provoke me no further; nothing but your insignificance saves you.

Isaac. I'faith, then my insignificance is the best friend I have. I am going, dear Ferdinand, What a cursed hot-headed bully, it is! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Garden of the Convent.*

Enter LOUISA and CLARA.

Lou. And you really wish my brother may not find you out.

Clara. Why else have I concealed myself under this disguise?

Lou. Why, perhaps, because the dress becomes you; for you certainly dont intend to be a nun for life.

Clara. If, indeed, Ferdinand had not offended me so last night.

Lou. Come, come, it was his fear of losing you made him so rash.

Clara. Well, you may think me cruel—but I swear, if he were here this instant, I believe I should forgive him. [*Sings.*

By him we love offended,
How soon our anger flies!
One day, apart, 't is ended,
Behold him, and it dies.

Last night, your roving brother,
Enraged I bade depart,
And sure his rude presumption
Deserved to lose my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
In spite of injured pride,
I fear my eyes would pardon,
Before my tongue could chide.

Lou. I protest, Clara, I shall begin to think you are seriously resolved to enter on your probation.

Clara. And, seriously, I very much doubt whether the character of a nun would not become me best.

Lou. Why, to be sure, the character of a nun is a very becoming one at a masquerade, but no pretty woman, in her senses, ever thought of taking the veil for above a night.

Clara. Yonder I see your Antonio is returned—I shall only interrupt you; ah, Louisa, with what happy eagerness you turn to look for him! [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Well, my Louisa, any news since I left you?

Lou. None. The messenger is not returned from my father.

Ant. Well, I confess, I do not perceive what we are to expect from him.

Lou. I shall be easier, however, in having made the trial; I do not doubt your sincerity, Antonio; but there is a chilling air around poverty, that often kills affection that was not nursed in it—if we would make love our household god, we had best secure him a comfortable roof.

Song. ANTONIO.

How oft, Louisa, hast thou told,
Nor wilt thou the fond boast disown,
Thou wouldst not lose Antonio's love,
To reign the partner of a throne.
And by those lips that spoke so kind,
And by that hand, I've pressed to mine,
To be the lord of wealth and power,
By Heavens, I would not part with thine.

I.

R

Then how, my soul, can we be poor,
 Who own what kingdoms could not buy?
 Of this true heart thou shalt be queen,
 In serving thee, a monarch I.
 Thus uncontrolled, in mutual bliss,
 And rich in love's exhaustless mine,
 Do thou snatch treasures from my lips,
 And I'll take kingdoms back from thine.

Enter MAID, with a Letter.

Lou. My father's answer, I suppose.

Ant. My dearest Louisa, you may be assured that it contains nothing but threats and reproaches.

Lou. Let us see however. [*Reads.*] *Dearest daughter, make your lover happy; you have my full consent to marry as your whim has chosen, but be sure come home and sup with your affectionate father.*

Ant. You jest, Louisa!

Lou. [*Gives him the letter.*] Read—read.

Ant. 'Tis so, by Heavens! sure there must be some mistake; but that's none of our business—Now, Louisa, you have no excuse for delay.

Lou. Shall we not then return and thank my father?

Ant. But first let the priest put it out of his power to recall his word. I'll fly to procure one.

Lou. Nay, if you part with me again, perhaps you may lose me.

Ant. Come then—there is a friar of a neighbouring convent is my friend; you have already been diverted by the manners of a nunnery, let us see whether there is less hypocrisy among the holy fathers.

Lou. I'm afraid not, Antonio—for in religion, as in friendship, they who profess most, are ever the least sincere.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter CLARA.

Clara. So, yonder they go, as happy as a mutual and confessed affection can make them ; while I am left in solitude, Heigho ! love may perhaps excuse the rashness of an elopement from one's friend ; but I am sure nothing but the presence of the man we love can support it. Ha ! what do I see ? Ferdinand, as I live ! how could he gain admission—by potent gold, I suppose, as Antonio did. How eager and disturbed he seems—he shall not know me as yet. *[Lets down her veil.*

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Yes, those were certainly they—my information was right. *[Going.*

Clara. *[Stops him.]* Pray, signor, what is your business here ?

Ferd. No matter—no matter—Oh, they stop. *[Looks out.]* Yes, that is the perfidious Clara indeed !

Clara. So a jealous error—I'm glad to see him so moved. *[Aside.*

Ferd. Her disguise cant conceal her—No, no, I know her too well.

Clara. Wonderful discernment ! but, signor—

Ferd. Be quiet, good nun, dont tease me. By heavens, she leans upon his arm, hangs fondly on it ! O woman ! woman !

Clara. But, signor, who is it you want ?

Ferd. Not you, not you, so prythee dont tease me. Yet pray stay, gentle nun, was it not Donna Clara d'Almanza just parted from you ?

Clara. Clara d'Almanza, signor, is not yet out of the garden.

Ferd. Ay, ay, I knew I was right. And pray, is not that gentleman, now at the porch with her, Antonio d'Ercilla ?

Clara. It is indeed, signor.

Ferd. So, so ; now but one question more, can you inform me for what purpose they have gone away ?

Clara. They are gone to be married, I believe.

Ferd. Very well—enough—now if I dont mar their wedding. [*Exit.*

Clara. [*Unveils.*] I thought jealousy had made lovers quick-sighted, but it has made mine blind. Louisa's story accounts to me for this error, and I am glad to find I have power enough over him to make him so unhappy. But why should not I be present at his surprise when undeceived ? When he's through the porch I'll follow him ; and, perhaps, Louisa shall not singly be a bride. [*Sings.*

Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies
The sullen echo of repentant sighs ;
Ye sister mourners of each lonely cell,
Inured to hymns and sorrow, fare ye well ;
For happier scenes I fly this darksome grove,
To saints a prison, but a tomb to love. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *A Court before the Priory.*

Enter ISAAC, crossing the stage. Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. What, my friend Isaac !

Isaac. What, Antonio ! wish me joy ! I have Louisa safe.

Ant. Have you ? I wish you joy, with all my soul.

Isaac. Yes, I am come here to procure a priest to marry us.

Ant. So then we are both on the same errand ; I am come to look for Father Paul.

Isaac. Ha ! I am glad on't ; but, i'faith, he must ~~seek~~ *seek* me first, my love is waiting.

Ant. So is mine, I left her in the porch.

Isaac. Ay, but I am in haste to get back to Don Jerome.

Ant. And so am I too.

Isaac. Well, perhaps he'll save time, and marry us both together—or I'll be your father, and you shall be mine. Come along; but you're obliged to me for all this.

Ant. Yes, yes. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V. *A Room in the Priory.*

FRIARS *drinking. Glee and Chorus.*

This bottle's the sun of our table,
His beams are rosy wine;
We planets, that are not able
Without his help to shine.
Let mirth and glee abound,
You'll soon grow bright,
With borrowed light,
And shine as he goes round.

Paul. Brother Francis, toss the bottle about, and give me your toast.

Fran. Have we drank the abbess of St. Ursuline?

Aug. Yes, yes; she was the last.

Fran. Then I'll give you the blue-eyed nun of St. Catherine's.

Paul. With all my heart. *[Drinks.]* Pray, Brother Augustine, were there any benefactions left in my absence?

Fran. Don Juan Corduba has left a hundred ducats, to remember him in our masses.

Paul. Has he? Let them be paid to our wine merchant, and we'll remember him in our cups, which will do just as well. Anything more?

Aug. Yes; Baptista, the rich miser, who died last

week, has bequeathed us a thousand pistoles, and the silver lamp he used in his own chamber, to burn before the image of St. Anthony.

Paul. 'Twas well meant, but we'll employ his money better—Baptista's bounty shall light the living, not the dead. St. Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark, though he was—— See who's there.

[A knocking, Francis goes to the door and opens it.]

Enter PORTER.

Porter. Here's one without in pressing haste to speak with Father Paul.

Aug. Brother Paul! *[Paul comes from behind a curtain, with a glass of wine and a piece of cake.]*

Paul. Here! how durst you, fellow, thus abruptly break in upon our devotions?

Porter. I thought they were finished.

Paul. No, they were not—were they, Brother Francis?

Aug. Not by a bottle each.

Paul. But neither you, nor your fellows, mark how the hours go—no, you mind nothing but the gratifying of your appetites; ye eat, and swill, and sleep, and gormandize, and thrive, while we are wasting in mortification.

Porter. We ask no more than nature craves.

Paul. 'Tis false, ye have more appetites than hairs! and your flushed, sleek, and pampered appearance, is the disgrace of our order—out on't—if you are hungry, cant you be content with the wholesome roots of the earth; and if you are dry, isn't there the crystal spring? *[Drinks.]* Put this away *[gives a glass]*; and show me where I'm wanted. *[Porter drains the glass—Paul going, turns.]* So, you would have drank it, if ~~there~~ had been any left. Ah, glutton! glutton!

SCENE VI. *The Court before the Priory.*

Enter ISAAC and ANTONIO.

Isaac. A plaguy while coming, this same Father Paul. He's detained at vespers, I suppose, poor fellow.

Ant. No, here he comes.

Enter PAUL.

Good Father Paul, I crave your blessing.

Isaac. Yes, good Father Paul, we are come to beg a favour.

Paul. What is it, pray?

Isaac. To marry us, good Father Paul; and in truth, thou dost look the very priest of Hymen.

Paul. In short, I may be called so; for I deal in repentance and mortification.

Isaac. No, no: thou seemest an officer of Hymen, because thy presence speaks content and good humour.

Paul. Alas! my appearance is deceitful. Bloated I am indeed; for fasting is a windy recreation, and it hath swollen me like a bladder.

Ant. But thou hast a good fresh colour in thy face, father; rosy, i'faith.

Paul. Yes, I have blushed for mankind, till the hue of my shame is as fixed as their vices.

Isaac. Good man!

Paul. And I have laboured too, but to what purpose? they continue to sin under my very nose.

Isaac. I'fecks, father, I should have guessed as much, for your nose seems to be put to the blush more than any other part of your face.

Paul. Go, you're a wag.

Ant. But to the purpose, father, will you officiate for us?

Paul. To join young people thus clandestinely, is not safe; and, indeed, I have in my heart many weighty reasons against it.

Ant. And I have in my hand many weighty reasons for it. Isaac, haven't you an argument or two in our favour about you.

Isaac. Yes, yes; here is a most unanswerable purse.

Paul. For shame! you make me angry; you forget who I am, and when importunate people have forced their trash—ay, into this pocket, here—or into this—why, then the sin was theirs. [*They put money into his pockets.*] Fie, now, how you distress me! I would return it, but that I must touch it that way, and so wrong my oath.

Ant. Now then, come with us.

Isaac. Ay, now give us your title to joy and rapture.

Paul. Well, when your hour of repentance comes, dont blame me.

Ant. No bad caution to my friend Isaac. [*Aside.*] Well, well, father, do you do your part, and I'll abide the consequence.

Isaac. Ay, and so will I. [*They are going.*]

Enter LOUISA, running.

Lou. Oh, Antonio, Ferdinand is at the porch, and inquiring for us.

Isaac. Who? Don Ferdinand? he's not inquiring for me, I hope.

Ant. Fear not, my love, I'll soon pacify him.

Isaac. Egad, you wont. Antonio, take my advice, and run away: this Ferdinand is the most unmerciful dog! and has the cursedest long sword! and upon my soul he comes on purpose to cut your throat.

Ant. Never fear, never fear.

Isaac. Well, you may stay if you will; but I'll get someone to marry me; for, by St. Iago, he shall never meet me again, while I am master of a pair of heels.

[*Runs out.*]

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. So, sir, I have met with you at last.

Ant. Well, sir.

Ferd. Base, treacherous man! whence can a false, deceitful soul, like yours, borrow confidence to look so steadily on the man you've injured?

Ant. Ferdinand, you are too warm:—'tis true you find me on the point of wedding one I love beyond my life; but no argument of mine prevailed on her to elope—I scorn deceit, as much as you. By heaven, I knew not she had left her father's till I saw her.

Ferd. What a mean excuse! you have wronged your friend, then, for one whose wanton forwardness anticipated your treachery—of this indeed your Jew pander informed me; but let your conduct be consistent, and since you have dared to do a wrong, follow me, and show me you have a spirit to avow it.

Lou. Antonio, I see his mistake—leave him to me.

Paul. Friend, you are rude, to interrupt the union of two willing hearts.

Ferd. No, meddling priest, the hand he seeks is mine.

Paul. If so, I'll proceed no further. Lady, did you promise this youth your hand? [*Louisa shakes her head.*]

Ferd. Clara, I thank you for your silence—I would not have heard your tongue avow such falsity; be't your punishment to remember I have not reproached you.

Enter CLARA.

Clara. What mockery is this?

Ferd. Antonio, you are protected now, but we shall meet. [*Going, Clara holds one arm, Louisa the other.*]

Lou. Turn thee round, I pray thee,
Calm awhile thy rage.

Clara. I must help to stay thee,
And thy wrath assuage.

Lou. Couldst thou not discover
One so dear to thee?

Clara. Canst thou be a lover,
And thus fly from me? [*Both unweil.*]

Ferd. How's this! my sister! Clara too! I'm confounded.

Lou. 'Tis even so, good brother.

Paul. How! what impiety! Did the man want to marry his own sister?

Lou. And art not you ashamed of yourself, not to know your own sister?

Clara. To drive away your own mistress—

Lou. Don't you see how jealousy blinds people?

Clara. Ay, and will you ever be jealous again?

Ferd. Never—never—you, sister, I know will forgive me—but how, Clara, shall I presume—

Clara. No, no; just now you told me not to tease you. "Who do you want, good signor?" "Not you, not you." Oh, you blind wretch! but swear never to be jealous again, and I'll forgive you.

Ferd. By all—

Clara. There, that will do—you'll keep the oath just as well. [*Gives her hand.*]

Lou. But, brother, here is one, to whom some apology is due.

Ferd. Antonio, I am ashamed to think—

Ant. Not a word of excuse, Ferdinand—I have not been in love myself without learning that a lover's anger should never be resented; but come, let us retire with this good father, and we'll explain to you the cause of this error.

Glee and Chorus.

Oft does Hymen smile to hear,
Wordy vows of feigned regard;

Well he knows when they're sincere,
 Never slow to give reward ;
 For his glory is to prove,
 Kind to those who wed for love [Exit.

SCENE VII. *A grand Saloon.*

Enter DON JEROME, SERVANTS, and LOPEZ.

Jer. Be sure now let everything be in the best order—let all my servants have on their merriest faces—but tell them to get as little drunk as possible, till after supper. So Lopez, where's your master? shant we have him at supper?

Lop. Indeed, I believe not, sir—he's mad, I doubt ; I'm sure he has frightened me from him.

Jer. Ay, ay, he's after some wench, I suppose ; a young rake ! Well, well, we'll be merry without him.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here is Signor Isaac.

Enter ISAAC.

Jer. So, my dear son-in-law—there, take my blessing and forgiveness ; but where's my daughter ? where's Louisa ?

Isaac. She's without, impatient for a blessing, but almost afraid to enter.

Jer. Oh, fly and bring her in. [Exit Isaac.] Poor girl, I long to see her pretty face.

Isaac. [Without.] Come, my charmer ! my trembling angel !

Enter ISAAC and DUENNA ; DON JEROME runs to meet them ; she kneels.

Jer. Come to my arms, my [starts back]—why, who the devil have we here ?

Isaac. Nay, Don Jerome, you promised her forgiveness ; see how the dear creature droops !

Jer. Droops indeed! Why, gad take me, this is **old** Margaret—but where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. Why, here, before your eyes—nay, dont *be* abashed, my sweet wife!

Jer. Wife with a vengeance! Why, zounds, you have not married the Duenna?

Duen. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, dear papa! you'll not disown me, sure!

Jer. Papa! papa! Why, zounds, your impudence is as great as your ugliness!

Isaac. Rise, my charmer, go throw your snowy arms about his neck, and convince him you are——

Duen. O sir, forgive me! [*Embraces him.*]

Jer. Help! murder!

Serv. What's the matter, sir?

Jer. Why, here, this damned Jew has brought an old harridan to strangle me.

Isaac. Lord, it is his own daughter, and he is so hard-hearted he wont forgive her.

Enter ANTONIO and LOUISA; they kneel.

Jer. Zounds and fury! what's here now? who sent for you, sir? and who the devil are you?

Ant. This lady's husband, sir.

Isaac. Ay, that he is, I'll be sworn; for I left them with the priest, and was to have given her away.

Jer. You were?

Isaac. Ay; that's my honest friend, Antonio; and that's the little girl I told you I had hampered him with.

Jer. Why, you are either drunk or mad—this is my daughter.

Isaac. No, no; 't is you are both drunk and mad, I think—here's your daughter.

Jer. Harkye, old Iniquity, will you explain all this or not?

Duen. Come then, Don Jerome, I will—though our habits might inform you all—look on your daughter there and on me.

Isaac. What's this I hear?

Duen. The truth is, that in your passion this morning, you made a small mistake; for you turned your daughter out of doors, and locked up your humble servant.

Isaac. O lud, O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to turn his own daughter out of doors, instead of an old Duenna.

Jer. And, O lud! O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to marry an old Duenna instead of my daughter—but how came the rest about?

Duen. I have only to add, that I remained in your daughter's place, and had the good fortune to engage the affections of my sweet husband here.

Isaac. Her husband! why, you old witch, do you think I'll be your husband now! this is a trick, a cheat, and you ought all to be ashamed of yourselves.

Ant. Harkye, Isaac, do you dare to complain of tricking—Don Jerome, I give you my word, this cunning Portuguese has brought all this upon himself, by endeavouring to overreach you, by getting your daughter's fortune, without making any settlement in return.

Jer. Overreach me!

Lou. 'Tis so, indeed, sir, and we can prove it to you.

Jer. Why, gad take me, it must be so, or he could never have put up with such a face as Margaret's—so, little Solomon, I wish you joy of your wife, with all my soul.

Lou. Isaac, tricking is all fair in love—let you alone for the plot.

Ant. A cunning dog, arn't you? a sly little villain, eh?

Lou. Roguish, perhaps; but keen, devilish keen.

Jer. Yes, yes; his aunt always called him little Solomon.

Isaac. Why, the plagues of Egypt upon you all! But do you think I'll submit to such an imposition?

Ant. Isaac, one serious word—you'd better be content as you are; for believe me, you will find that, in the opinion of the world, there is not a fairer subject for contempt and ridicule, than a knave become the dupe of his own art.

Isaac. I don't care—I'll not endure this—Don Jerome, 'tis you have done this—you would be so cursed positive about the beauty of her you locked up, and all the time, I told you she was as old as my mother, and as ugly as the devil.

Duen. Why, you little insignificant reptile!

Jer. That's right—attack him, Margaret.

Duen. Dares such a thing as you pretend to talk of beauty? A walking rouleau!—a body that seems to owe all its consequence to the dropsy!—a pair of eyes like two dead beetles in a wad of brown dough!—a beard like an artichoke, with dry shrivelled jaws that would disgrace the mummy of a monkey!

Jer. Well done, Margaret!

Duen. But you shall know that I have a brother, who wears a sword, and if you don't do me justice—

Isaac. Fire seize your brother, and you too! I'll fly to Jerusalem to avoid you!

Duen. Fly where you will, I'll follow you.

Jer. Throw your snowy arms about him, Margaret. [*Exeunt Isaac and Duenna.*] But, Louisa, are you really married to this modest gentleman?

Lou. Sir, in obedience to your commands, I gave him my hand within this hour.

Jer. My commands!

Ant. Yes, sir; here is your consent, under your own hand.

Jer. How! would you rob me of my child by a trick,

a false pretence? and do you think to get her fortune by the same means? Why, 'slife, you are as great a rogue as Isaac.

Ant. No, Don Jerome; though I have profited by this paper, in gaining your daughter's hand, I scorn to obtain her fortune by deceit. There, sir. [*Gives a letter.*] Now give her your blessing for a dower, and all the little I possess shall be settled on her in return. Had you wedded her to a prince he could do no more.

Jer. Why, gad take me, but you are a very extraordinary fellow! But have you the impudence to suppose no one can do a generous action but yourself? Here, Louisa, tell this proud fool of yours, that he's the only man I know that would renounce your fortune; and, by my soul, he's the only man in Spain that's worthy of it. There, bless you both: I'm an obstinate old fellow when I'm in the wrong; but you shall now find me as steady in the right.

Enter FERDINAND and CLARA.

Another wonder still! why, sirrah! Ferdinand, you have not stole a nun, have you?

Ferd. She is a nun in nothing but her habit, sir. Look nearer, and you will perceive 'tis Clara D'Almanza, Don Guzman's daughter; and with pardon for stealing a wedding, she is also my wife.

Jer. Gadsbud, and a great fortune! Ferdinand, you are a prudent young rogue, and I forgive you: and, i'fecks, you are a pretty little damsel. Give your father-in-law a kiss, you smiling rogue.

Clara. There, old gentleman; and now mind you behave well to us.

Jer. I'fecks, those lips haven't been chilled by kissing beads. Egad, I believe I shall grow the best humoured fellow in all Spain. Lewis, Sancho, Carlos! d'ye hear?

are all my doors thrown open? Our children's weddings are the only holidays our age can boast; and then we drain with pleasure the little stock of spirits time has left us. [*Music within.*] But see, here come our friends and neighbours!

Enter MASQUERADERS.

And, i'faith, we'll make a night on't, with wine, and dance, and catches—then old and young shall join us.

Jer. Come, now for jest and smiling,
Both old and young beguiling,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Lou. Thus crowned with dance and song,
The hours shall glide along;
With a heart at ease, merry merry glees,
Can never fail to please.

Ferd. Each bride with blushes glowing,
Our wine as rosy flowing,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Ant. Then healths to every friend,
The night's repast shall end;
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees
Can never fail to please.

Clara Nor, while we are so joyous,
Shall anxious fear annoy us,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Jer. For generous guests like these,
Accept the wish to please,
So we'll laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Your smiles drive care away.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

A FARCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY PERFORMED AT COVENT-GARDEN.

LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR	..	..	Mr. Clinch.
DOCTOR ROSY	..	..	Mr. Quick.
JUSTICE CREDULOUS	..	..	Mr. Lee Lewes.
SERGEANT TROUNCE	..	..	Mr. Booth.
CORPORAL FLINT	..	..	..
LAURETTA	..	..	Mrs. Cargill.
MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS	..	..	Mrs. Pitt.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter TROUNCE, FLINT, and four SOLDIERS.

First Sol. I say you are wrong ; we should all speak together, each for himself, and all at once, that we may be heard the better.

Sec. Sol. Right, Jack, we'll argue in platoons.

Third Sol. Ay, ay, let him have our grievances in a volley, and if we be to have a spokesman, there's the corporal is the lieutenant's countryman, and knows his humour.

Cor. Let me alone for that. I served three years, within a bit, under his honour, in the Royal Inniskillions, and I never will see a sweeter tempered gentleman, nor one more free with his purse. I put a great shamrock in his hat this morning, and I'll be bound for him he'll wear it, was it as big as Stephen's Green.

Fourth Sol. I say again then you talk like youngsters, like militia striplings ; there's a discipline, look'ee, in all things, whereof the sergeant must be our guide ; he's a gentleman of words ; he understands your foreign lingo, your figures, and such like auxiliaries in scoring. Confess now for a reckoning, whether in chalk or writing, ben't he your only man?

Cor. Why the sergeant is a scholar to be sure, and has the gift of reading.

Serg. Good soldiers, and fellow-gentleman, if you make me your spokesman, you will show the more judgment; and let me alone for the argument. I'll be as loud as a drum, and point blank from the purpose.

All. Agreed, agreed.

Cor. Oh faith! here comes the lieutenant; now, sergeant.

Serg. So then, to order. Put on your mutiny looks; every man grumble a little to himself, and some of you hum the deserter's march.

Enter LIEUTENANT.

Lieut. Well, honest lads, what is it you have to complain of?

Sol. Ahem! hem!

Serg. So please your honour, the very grievance of the matter is this: ever since your honour differed with Justice Credulous, our innkeepers use us most scurvily. By my halbert, their treatment is such, that if your spirit was willing to put up with it, flesh and blood could by no means agree; so we humbly petition that your honour would make an end of the matter at once, by running away with the justice's daughter, or else get us fresh quarters,—hem! hem!

Lieut. Indeed! Pray which of the houses use you ill?

First Sol. There's the Red Lion hasn't half the civility of the old Red Lion.

Sec. Sol. There's the White Horse, if he wasn't casehardened, ought to be ashamed to show his face.

Lieut. Very well; the Horse and the Lion shall answer for it at the Quarter Sessions.

Serg. The two Magpies are civil enough; but the

Angel uses us like devils, and the Rising Sun refuses us light to go to bed by.

Lieut. Then, upon my word, I'll have the Rising Sun put down, and the Angel shall give security for his good behaviour; but are you sure you do nothing to quit scores with them?

Cor. Nothing at all, your honour, unless now and then we happen to fling a cartridge into the kitchen fire, or put a spatterdash or so into the soup; and sometimes Ned drums up and down stairs a little of a night.

Lieut. Oh, all that's fair: but harkye lads, I must have no grumbling on St. Patrick's day; so here, take this, and divide it amongst you. But observe me,—show yourselves men of spirit, and dont spend sixpence of it in drink.

Serg. Nay, hang it, your honour, soldiers should never bear malice; we must drink St. Patrick's and your honour's health.

All. Oh, damn malice! St. Patrick's and his honour by all means.

Cor. Come away, then, lads, and first we'll parade round the Market Cross, for the honour of King George.

First Sol. Thank your honour. Come along; St. Patrick, his honour, and strong beer for ever!

[*Exit Soldiers.*]

Lieut. Get along, you thoughtless vagabonds! yet, upon my conscience, 't is very hard these poor fellows should scarcely have bread from the soil they would die to defend.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Ah, my little Doctor Rosy, my Galen abridged, what's the news?

Doct. All things are as they were, my Alexander; the justice is as violent as ever. I felt his pulse on the

matter again, and, thinking his rage began to intermit, I wanted to throw in the bark of good advice, but it would not do. He says you and your cut-throats have a plot upon his life, and swears he had rather see his daughter in a scarlet fever than in the arms of a soldier.

Lieut. Upon my word the army is very much obliged to him. Well, then, I must marry the girl first, and ask his consent afterwards.

Doct. So, then, the case of her fortune is desperate, eh?

Lieut. Oh, hang fortune, let that take its chance; there is a beauty in Lauretta's simplicity, so pure a bloom upon her charms.

Doct. So there is, so there is. You are for beauty as nature made her, eh? No artificial graces, no cosmetic varnish, no beauty in grain, eh?

Lieut. Upon my word, doctor, you are right; the London ladies were always too handsome for me; then they are so defended, such a circumvallation of hoop, with a breast-work of whalebone, that would turn a pistol bullet, much less Cupid's arrows, then turret on turret on top, with stores of concealed weapons, under pretence of black pins; and, above all, a standard of feathers that would do honour to a knight of the Bath. Upon my conscience, I could as soon embrace an Amazon, armed at all points.

Doct. Right, right, my Alexander, my taste to a tittle.

Lieut. Then, doctor, though I admire modesty in women, I like to see their faces. I am for the changeable rose; but with one of those quality Amazons, if their midnight dissipations had left them blood enough to raise a blush, they have not room enough in their ~~cheeks~~ to show it. To be sure, bashfulness is a very

pretty thing ; but, in my mind, there is nothing on earth so impudent as an everlasting blush.

Doct. My taste, my taste. Well, Lauretta is none of these. Ah ! I never see her but she puts me in mind of my poor dear wife.

Lieut. Ay, faith ; in my opinion she cant do a worse thing. Now he is going to bother me about an old hag that has been dead these six years. [*Aside.*

Doct. Oh, poor Dolly ! I never shall see her like again ; such an arm for a bandage—veins that seemed to invite the lancet. Then her skin, smooth and white as a gallipot ; her mouth as round and not larger than the mouth of a penny phial ; her lips conserve of roses ; and then her teeth—none of your sturdy fixtures—ache as they would, it was but a small pull, and out they came. I believe I have drawn half a score of her poor dear pearls [*weeps*] ; but what avails her beauty ? Death has no consideration—one must die as well as another.

Lieut. Oh, if he begins to moralise——

[*Takes out his snuff-box.*

Doct. Fair and ugly, crooked or straight, rich or poor—flesh is grass—flowers fade !

Lieut. Here, doctor, take a pinch, and keep up your spirits.

Doct. True, true, my friend ; grief cant mend the matter—all's for the best ; but such a woman was a great loss, lieutenant.

Lieut. To be sure, for doubtless she had mental accomplishments equal to her beauty.

Doct. Mental accomplishments ! she would have stuffed an alligator, or pickled a lizard, with any apothecary's wife in the kingdom. Why she could decipher a prescription, and invent the ingredients, almost as well as myself ! Then she was such a hand at

making foreign waters ! for Seltzer, Pyrmont, Islington, or Chalybeate, she never had her equal ; and her Bath and Bristol springs exceeded the originals. Ah, poor Dolly ! she fell a martyr to her own discoveries.

Lieut. How so, pray ?

Doct. Poor soul ! her illness was occasioned by her zeal in trying an improvement on the Spa-water, by an infusion of rum and acid.

Lieut. Ay, ay, spirits never agree with water-drinkers.

Doct. No, no, you mistake. Rum agreed with her well enough ; it was not the rum that killed the poor dear creature, for she died of a dropsy. Well, she is gone, never to return, and has left no pledge of our loves behind. No little babe, to hang like a label round papa's neck. Well, well, we are all mortal—sooner or later—flesh is grass—flowers fade.

Lieut. Oh, the devil !—again !

Doct. Life's a shadow—the world a stage—we strut an hour.

Lieut. Here, doctor. *[Offers snuff.]*

Doct. True, true, my friend—well, high grief can't cure it. All's for the best, eh ! my little Alexander.

Lieut. Right, right ; an apothecary should never be out of spirits. But come, faith, 'tis time honest Humphry should wait on the justice ; that must be our first scheme.

Doct. True, true ; you should be ready : the clothes are at my house, and I have given you such a character that he is impatient to have you : he swears you shall be his body-guard. Well, I honour the army, or I should never do so much to serve you.

Lieut. Indeed, I am bound to you for ever, doctor ; and when once I am possessed of my dear Lauretta, I'll endeavour to make work for you as fast as possible.

Doct. Now you put me in mind of my poor wife again.

Lieut. Ah, pray forget her a little: we shall be too late.

Doct. Poor Dolly!

Lieut. 'Tis past twelve.

Doct. Inhuman dropsy!

Lieut. The justice will wait.

Doct. Cropped in her prime!

Lieut. For heaven's sake, come!

Doct. Well, flesh is grass.

Lieut. Oh, the devil!

Doct. We must all die—

Lieut. Doctor!

Doct. Kings, lords, and commons——

[Forces him off.]

SCENE II.

Enter LAURETTA and BRIDGET.

Lau. I repeat it again, mamma, officers are the prettiest men in the world, and Lieutenant O'Connor is the prettiest officer I ever saw.

Bri. For shame, Laura! how can you talk so? or if you must have a military man, there's Lieutenant Plow, or Captain Haycock, or Major Dray, the brewer, are all your admirers; and though they are peaceable, good kind of men, they have as large cockades, and become scarlet as well as the fighting folks.

Lau. Psha! you know, mamma, I hate militia officers—a set of dunghill cocks with spurs on—heroes scratched off a church-door—clowns in military masquerade, wearing the dress without supporting the character. No, give me the bold, upright youth, who makes love to-day and has his head shot off to-morrow.

Dear! to think how the sweet fellows sleep on the ground, and fight in silk stockings and lace ruffles.

Bri. Oh, barbarous! to want a husband that may wed you to-day, and be sent the Lord knows where before night; then in a twelvemonth perhaps to have him come like a Colossus, with one leg at New York, and the other at Chelsea Hospital.

Lau. Then I'll be his crutch, mamma.

Bri. No, give me a husband that knows where his limbs are, though he want the use of them. And if he should take you with him, to sleep in a baggage-cart, and stroll about the camp like a gipsy, with a knapsack and two children at your back; then, by way of entertainment in the evening, to make a party with the sergeant's wife to drink bohea tea, and play at all-fours on a drum-head: 'tis a precious life, to be sure.

Lau. Nay, mamma, you shouldn't be against my lieutenant, for I heard him say you were the best natured and best looking woman in the world.

Bri. Why, child, I never said but that Lieutenant O'Connor was a very well-bred and discerning young man; 'tis your papa is so violent against him.

Lau. Why, cousin Sophy married an officer.

Bri. Ay, Laury, an officer in the militia.

Lau. No, indeed, mamma, a marching regiment.

Bri. No, child, I tell you he was a major of militia.

Lau. Indeed, mamma, it wasn't.

Enter JUSTICE.

Just. Bridget, my love, I have had a message.

Lau. It was cousin Sophy told me so.

Just. I have had a message, love——

Bri. No, child, she would say no such thing.

Just. A message, I say.

Lau. How could he be in the militia, when he was ordered abroad?

Bri. Ay, girl, hold your tongue. Well, my dear.

Just. I have had a message from Doctor Rosy.

Bri. He ordered abroad! He went abroad for his health.

Just. Why, Bridget——

Bri. Well, deary. Now hold your tongue, miss.

Just. A message from Dr. Rosy, and Dr. Rosy says——

Lau. I'm sure, mamma, his regimentals——

Just. Damn his regimentals! Why dont you listen?

Bri. Ay, girl, how durst you interrupt your papa?

Lau. Well, papa.

Just. Doctor Rosy says he'll bring——

Lau. Were blue turned up with red, mamma?

Just. Laury——says he will bring the young man——

Bri. Red! yellow, if you please, miss.

Just. Bridget——the young man that is to be hired——

Bri. Besides, miss, it is very unbecoming in you to want to have the last word with your mamma; you should know——

Just. Why, zounds! will you hear me or no?

Bri. I am listening, my love—I am listening. But what signifies my silence, what good is my not speaking a word, if this girl will interrupt and let nobody speak but herself? Ay, I dont wonder, my life, at your impatience; your poor dear lips quiver to speak; but I suppose she'll run on, and not let you put in a word. You may very well be angry; there is nothing sure so provoking as a chattering, talking——

Lau. Nay, I am sure, mamma, it is you will not let papa speak now.

Bri. Why, you little provoking minx——

Just. Get out of the room directly, both of you—
get out!

Bri. Ay, go, girl.

Just. Go, Bridget; you are worse than she, you old hag. I wish you were both up to the neck in the canal, to argue there till I took you out.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Doctor Rosy, sir.

Just. Show him up. [*Exit Servant.*]

Lau. Then you own, mamma, it was a marching regiment!

Bri. You're an obstinate fool, I tell you; for if that had been the case——

Just. You wont go?

Bri. We are going, Mr. Surly. If that had been the case, I say, how could——

Lau. Nay, mamma, one proof.

Bri. How could major——

Lau. And a full proof—— [*Justice drives them off.*]

Just. There they go, ding dong in for the day. Good lack! a fluent tongue is the only thing a mother dont like her daughter to resemble her in.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Well, Doctor, where's the lad—where's trusty?

Doct. At hand; he'll be here in a minute, I'll answer for't. He's such a one as you haven't met with—brave as a lion, gentle as a saline draught.

Just. Ah, he comes in the place of a rogue, a dog that was corrupted by the lieutenant. But this is a sturdy fellow, is he, doctor?

Doct. As Hercules; and the best backword in the

country. Egad, he'll make the red-coats keep their distance.

Just. Oh, the villains! this is St. Patrick's Day, and the rascals have been parading my house all the morning. I know they have a design upon me; but I have taken all precautions: I have magazines of arms, and if this fellow does but prove faithful, I shall be more at ease.

Doct. Doubtless he'll be a comfort to you.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. There is a man below, sir, inquires for Doctor Rosy.

Doct. Show him up.

Just. Hold! a little caution: how does he look?

Ser. A country-looking fellow, your worship.

Just. Oh, well, well; for Doctor Rosy, these rascals try all ways to get in here.

Ser. Yes, please your worship; there was one here this morning wanted to speak to you: he said his name was Corporal Breakbones.

Just. Corporal Breakbones!

Ser. And Drummer Crackskull came again.

Just. Ay! did you ever hear of such a damned confounded crew? Well, show the lad in here!

[Exit Servant.]

Doct. Ay, he'll be your porter; he'll give the rogues an answer.

Enter LIEUTENANT, disguised as HUMPHRY.

Just. So, a tall—I'facks! what! has he lost an eye?

Doct. Only a bruise he got in taking seven or eight highwaymen.

Just. He has a damned wicked leer somehow with the other.

First Coun. Noa, I was always too lively to take to learning; but John here is main clever at it.

Serg. So, what you're a scholar, friend?

Sec. Coun. I was born so, measter. Feyther kept grammar school.

Serg. Lucky man—in a campaign or two put yourself down chaplain to the regiment. And I warrant you have read of warriors and heroes?

Sec. Coun. Yes, that I have: I have read of Jack the Giant-killer, and the Dragon of Wantley, and the—Noa, I believe that's all in the hero way, except once about a comet.

Serg. Wonderful knowledge! Well, my heroes, I'll write word to the king of your good intentions, and meet me half-an-hour hence at the Two Magpies.

Coun. We will, your honour, we will.

Serg. But stay; for fear I shouldn't see you again in the crowd, clap these little bits of ribbon into your hats.

First Coun. Our hats are none of the best.

Serg. Well, meet me at the Magpies, and I'll give you money to buy new ones.

Coun. Bless your honour, thank your honour. [*Exit.*]

Serg. [*Winking at Sol.*] Jack. [*Exeunt Soldiers.*]

Enter LIEUTENANT.

So, here comes one would make a grenadier. Stop, friend, will you list?

Lieut. Who shall I serve under?

Serg. Under me, to be sure.

Lieu. Isn't Lieutenant O'Connor your officer?

Serg. He is, and I am commander over him.

Lieut. What! be your sergeants greater than your captains?

To be sure we are; 'tis our business to keep

them in order. For instance now, the general writes to me, dear Sergeant, or dear Trounce, or dear Sergeant Trounce, according to his hurry, if your lieutenant does not demean himself accordingly, let me know. Yours, General Deluge.

Lieut. And do you complain of him often?

Serg. No, hang him, the lad is good-natured at bottom, so I pass over small things. But harkee, between ourselves, he is most confoundedly given to wenching.

Enter CORPORAL.

Cor. Please your honour, the doctor is coming this way with his worship. We are all ready, and have our cues.

Lieut. Then, my dear Trounce, or my dear Sergeant, or my dear Sergeant Trounce, take yourself away.

Serg. Zounds! the lieutenant. I smell of the black hole already. *[Exit.]*

Enter JUSTICE and DOCTOR.

Just. I thought I saw some of the cut-throats.

Doct. I fancy not; there's no one but honest Humphry. Ha! Odds life, here come some of them—we'll stay by these trees, and let them pass.

Just. Oh, the bloody-looking dogs! *[Walks aside.]*

Enter CORPORAL and TWO SOLDIERS.

Cor. Holloa, friend! do you serve Justice Credulous?

Lieut. I do.

Cor. Are you rich?

Lieut. Noa.

Cor. Nor ever will with that old stingy booby. Look here—take it. *[Gives him a purse.]*

Lieut. What must I do for this?

Cor. Mark me, our lieutenant is in love with the old rogue's daughter; help us to break his worship's bones, and carry off the girl, and you are a made man.

Lieut. I'll see you hanged first, you pack of scurvy villains! *[Throws away the purse.]*

Cor. What, sirrah, do you mutiny? Lay hold of him.

Lieut. Nay, then, I'll try your armour for you. *[Beats them.]*

All. Oh! oh! Quarter! quarter! *[Exeunt.]*

Just. Trim them, trounce them, break their bones, honest Humphry. What a spirit he has!

Doct. Aquafortis.

Lieut. Betray my master!

Doct. What a miracle of fidelity!

Just. Ay, and it shall not go unrewarded—I'll give him sixpence on the spot. Here, honest Humphry, there's for yourself; as for this bribe *[takes up the purse]*, such trash is best in the hands of justice. Now then, doctor, I think I may trust him to guard the women; while he is with them I may go out with safety.

Doct. Doubtless you may. I'll answer for the lieutenant's behaviour whilst honest Humphry is with your daughter.

Just. Ay, ay, she shall go nowhere without him. Come along, honest Humphry. How rare it is to meet with such a servant! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *A Garden.* LAURETTA *discovered.*

Enter JUSTICE and LIEUTENANT.

Just. Why, you little truant, how durst you wander
 † from the house without my leave? Do you want

to invite that scoundrel lieutenant to scale the walls, and carry you off?

Lau. Lud, papa, you are so apprehensive for nothing.

Just. Why, hussy—

Lau. Well, then, I cant bear to be shut up all day so like a nun. I am sure it is enough to make one wish to be run away with—and I wish I was run away with—I do—and I wish the lieutenant knew it.

Just. You do, do you, hussy? Well, I think I'll take pretty good care of you. Here, Humphry, I leave this lady in your care. Now you may walk about the garden, Miss Pert; but Humphry shall go with you wherever you go. So mind, honest Humphry. I am obliged to go abroad for a little while; let no one but yourself come near her; dont be shame-faced, you booby, but keep close to her. And now, miss, let your lieutenant or any of his crew come near you if they can.

[*Exit.*]

Lau. How this booby stares after him!

[*Sits down and sings.*]

Lieut. Lauretta!

Lau. Not so free, fellow!

[*Sings.*]

Lieut. Lauretta! look on me.

Lau. Not so free, fellow!

Lieut. No recollection?

Lau. Honest Humphry, be quiet.

Lieut. Have you forgot your faithful soldier?

Lau. Ah! Oh, preserve me!

Lieut. 'Tis, my soul! your truest slave, passing on your father in this disguise.

Lau. Well now, I declare this is charming—you are so disguised, my dear lieutenant, and you do look so delightfully ugly. I am sure no one will find you out, ha! ha! ha! You know I am under your protection; papa charged you to keep close to me.

would I interpret the language of her pulse—declare my own sufferings in my receipt for her—send her a pearl necklace in a pill box, or a cordial draught with an acrostic on the label. Well, those days are over; no happiness lasting: all is vanity—now sunshine, now cloudy—we are, as it were, king and beggar: then what avails——

Enter LIEUTENANT.

Lieut. O doctor! ruined and undone.

Doct. The pride of beauty——

Lieut. I am discovered, and——

Doct. The gaudy palaces——

Lieut. The justice is——

Doct. The pompous wig——

Lieut. Is more enraged than ever.

Doct. The gilded cane——

Lieut. Why, doctor! [*Slapping him on the shoulder.*]

Doct. Eh?

Lieut. Confound your morals! I tell you I am discovered, discomfited, disappointed.

Doct. Indeed! Good lack, good lack, to think of the instability of human affairs. Nothing certain in this world—most deceived when most confident—fools of fortune all.

Lieut. My dear doctor, I want at present a little practical wisdom. I am resolved this instant to try the scheme we were going to put in execution last week. I have the letter ready, and only want your assistance to recover my ground.

Doct. With all my heart. I'll warrant you I'll bear a part in it: but how the deuce were you discovered?

Lieut. I'll tell you as we go; there's not a moment lost.

Doct. Heaven send we succeed better—but there's no knowing.

Lieut. Very true.

Doct. We may, and we may not.

Lieut. Right.

Doct. Time must show.

Lieut. Certainly.

Doct. We are but blind guessers.

Lieut. Nothing more.

Doct. Thick-sighted mortals.

Lieut. Remarkably.

Doct. Wandering in error

Lieut. Even so.

Doct. Futurity is dark.

Lieut. As a cellar.

Doct. Men are moles.

[Lieutenant forcing him out.]

SCENE IV. *Justice's House.*

Enter JUSTICE and BRIDGET.

Just. Odds life, Bridget, you are enough to make one mad! I tell you he would have deceived a chief justice: the dog seemed as ignorant as my clerk, and talked of honesty as if he had been a churchwarden.

Bri. Pho! nonsense, honesty! What had you to do, pray, with honesty? A fine business you have made of it with your Humphry Hum; and miss, too, she must have been privy to it. Laretta, ay, you would have her called so; but for my part I never knew any good come of giving girls these heathen christian names: if you had called her Deborah, or Tabitha, or Ruth, or Rebecca, or Joan, nothing of this had ever happened; but I always knew Laretta was a runaway name.

Just. Psha, you're a fool.

Bri. No, Mr. Credulous, it is you who are a fool, and no one but such a simpleton would be so imposed on.

Just. Why, zounds, madam, how durst you talk so? if you have no respect for your husband, I should think *unus quorum* might command a little deference.

Bri. Dont tell me—*Unus* fiddlestick! you ought to be ashamed to show your face at the sessions: you'll be a laughing-stock to the whole bench, and a byeword with all the pigtailed lawyers and bagwigged attorneys about town.

Just. Is this language for his Majesty's representative? by the statutes, it's high treason and petty treason, both at once.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A letter for your worship.

Just. Who brought it?

Serv. A soldier.

Just. Take it away, and burn it.

Bri. Stay. Now you're in such a hurry—it is some canting scrawl from the Lieutenant, I suppose, let me see—ay, 'tis signed O'Connor.

Just. Well, come, read it out.

Bri. "*Revenge is sweet.*"

Just. It begins so, does it? I'm glad of that; I'll let the dog know I'm of his opinion.

Bri. "*And though disappointed of my designs upon your daughter, I have still the satisfaction of knowing I'm revenged on her unnatural father; for this morning, in your chocolate, I had the pleasure to administer to you a dose of poison.*" Mercy on us!

Just. No tricks, Bridget: come, you know it is no ; you know it is a lie.

Bri. Read it yourself.

Just. "*Pleasure to administer a dose of poison.*"

Oh, horrible! Cut-throat villain! Bridget!

Bri. Lovee, stay, here's a postscript: "*N.B.—'Tis not in the power of medicine to save you.*"

Just. Odds my life, Bridget! why dont you call for help? I've lost my voice. My brain is giddy. I shall burst, and no assistance. John! Laury! John!

Bri. You see, lovee, what you have brought on yourself.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Your worship.

Just. Stay, John; did you perceive anything in my chocolate cup this morning?

Serv. Nothing, your worship, unless it was a little grounds.

Just. What colour were they?

Serv. Blackish, your worship.

Just. Ay, arsenic, black arsenic. Why dont you run for Doctor Rosy, you rascal?

Serv. Now, sir?

Bri. Oh, lovee, you may be sure it is in vain; let him run for the lawyer to witness your will, my life.

Just. Zounds! go for the doctor, you scoundrel. You are all confederate murderers.

Serv. Oh, here he is, your worship. [*Exit.*]

Just. Now, Bridget, hold your tongue, and let me see if my horrid situation be apparent.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doct. I have but just called to inform—eh! bless me, what's the matter with your worship?

Just. There, he sees it already. Poison in' my face, in capitals. Yes, yes, I'm a sure job for the undertakers indeed.

Bri. Oh! oh! alas, doctor!

Just. Peace, Bridget. Why doctor, my dear old friend, do you really see any change in me?

Doct. Change! never was man so altered: how came these black spots on your nose?

Just. Spots on my nose!

Doct. And that wild stare in your right eye?

Just. In my right eye!

Doct. Ay, and alack, alack, how you are swelled!

Just. Swelled!

Doct. Ay, dont you think he is, madam?

Bri. Oh, 'tis in vain to conceal it: indeed, lovee, you are as big again as you were this morning.

Just. Yes, I feel it now—I'm poisoned. Doctor, help me, for the love of justice. Give me life to see my murderer hanged.

Doct. What?

Just. I'm poisoned, I say!

Doct. Speak out!

Just. What! cant you hear me?

Doct. Your voice is so low and hollow, as it were; I cant hear a word you say.

Just. I'm gone then; "*hic jacet*, many years one of his Majesty's justices."

Bri. Read, doctor. Ah, lovee, the will. Consider, my life, how soon you will be dead.

Just. No, Bridget, I shall die by inches.

Doct. I never heard such monstrous iniquity. Oh, you are gone indeed, my friend; the mortgage of your little bit of clay is out, and the sexton has nothing to do but to close. We must all go, sooner or later—high and low. Death's a debt; his mandamus binds all alike. No bail, no demurrer.

Just. Silence, Doctor Croaker; will you cure me, or will you not?

Doct. Alas ! my dear friend, it is not in my power, but I'll certainly see justice done on your murderer.

Just. I thank you, my dear friend, but I had rather see it myself.

Doct. Ay, but if you recover, the villain will escape.

Bri. Will he ? then indeed it would be a pity you should recover. I am so enraged against the villain, I cant bear the thought of his escaping the halter.

Just. That's very kind in you, my dear ; but, if it's the same thing to you, my dear, I had as soon recover, notwithstanding. What, doctor, no assistance !

Doct. I'fecks, I can do nothing ; but there's the German quack, whom you wanted to send from town ; I met him at the next door, and I know he has antidotes for all poisons.

Just. Fetch him, my dear friend, fetch him : I'll get him a diploma if he cures me.

Doct. Well, there's no time to be lost ; you continue to swell immensely. [Exit.

Bri. What, my dear, will you submit to be cured by a quack nostrum-monger ? For my part, as much as I love you, I had rather follow you to your grave than see you owe your life to any but a regular bred physician.

Just. I am sensible of your affection, dearest ; and be assured nothing consoles me in my melancholy situation so much as the thought of leaving you behind.

Enter DOCTOR, and LIEUTENANT disguised.

Doct. Great luck ; met him passing by the door.

Lieut. Metto dowsei pulsum,

Doct. He desires me to feel your pulse.

Just. Cant he speak English ?

Doct. Not a word.

Lieut. Palio vivem mortem soonem.

Doct. He says you have not six hours to live.

Lieut. I am, sir, and proud of both.

Just. The two things on earth I most hate ; so I'll tell you what—renounce your country and sell your commission, and I'll forgive you.

Lieut. Harkye, Mr. Justice—if you were not the father of my Lauretta, I would pull your nose for asking the first, and break your bones for desiring the second.

Doct. Ay, ay, you're right.

Just. Is he? then I'm sure I must be wrong. Here, sir, I give my daughter to you, who are the most impudent dog I ever saw in my life.

Lieut. Oh, sir, say what you please ; with such a gift as Lauretta, every word is a compliment.

Bri. Well, my lovee, I think this will be a good subject for us to quarrel about the rest of our lives.

Just. Why, truly, my dear, I think so, though we are seldom at a loss for that.

Doct. This is all as it should be. My Alexander, I give you joy, and you, my little god-daughter ; and now my sincere wish is, that you may make just such a wife as my poor dear Dolly.